~~Mumford Room 6.42~~ OLZ5
Upper Library ~~30 E.9~~ III c9

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Sacristy

H. 1. 15

1475

Whan that Aprille With his shouris sote
And the droughte of marche hath pe'd ỹ rote
And bathed euery veyne in suche licour
Of Whiche vertu engendrid is the flour
Whanne zepherus eke With his sote breth
Enspirid hath in euery holte and heth
The tendir croppis, and the yong sonne
Hath in the ram halfe his cours y ronne
And smale foulis make melodie
That slepyn al nyght With open ye
So prikith hem nature in her corage
Than longyng folk to gon on pilgremage
And palmers to seche straunge londis
To serue halowis couthe in sondry londis
And specially fro euery shiris ende
Of yngelond to Caunterbury thy Wende
The holy blisful martir forto seke
That them hath holpyn Whan they Were seke
Bifil in that seson on a day
In Southwerk atte tabard as I lay
Redy to Wende on my pilgremage
To Caunterbury With deuout corage
That nyght Was come in to that hosterye
Wel nyne & twenty in a companye
Of sondry folk be auenture y falle
In felesship as pilgrymys Were they alle
That toward Caunterbury Wolden ryde
The chambris and the stablis Were Wyde
And Wel Were they esid atte beste

And shortly whan the sonne was at reste
So hadd I spoken with hem aueriche
That I was of her felesship anon
And made forward erly forto ryse
To take our wey there as I you deuyse
But natheles whiles that y haue tyme & space
Or that y ferthir in this tale pace
Me thynketh that it were accordaunt to reson
To telle you al the condicion
Of eche of hem so as it semed me
And whiche they were and of what degre
And in what aray eke they were eryme
And at a knyght I wil begynne
A knyght ther was a worthy man
That fro the tyme he first began
To riden out he loued chyualrye
Trouthe and honour fredom and curtesye
Ful worthy he was in his lordis werre
And therto hadde he riden noman ferre
And as wel in cristendom as in hethenesse
And euer hadde honour for his worthynesse
At alisaundre he was whan it was wonne
Ful ofte tyme he hadd the boord begonne
Aboue alle nacions in prusse
In lettowe hadde he reysed and in ruse
No cristen may so eften tymes as he
In granade at the sege eke hadde he be
In algrith hadde he riden and in belmarie
At cartage was he and eke at satalye

Whanne they were Comme and in the greete see
At many at nobil aryue hadde he he
At mortal batailles hady he be fiftene
And foughte for oure feith at Tramyssene
In listis thries and hath sleyn his foo
This ilke Worthy knyght hadde be also
Som tyme With the lordy of Palathie
Agayn another hethen may in Turkye
And euermore he hadde a souerayn prise
And though he Was Worthy he Was Wise
And of his port as meke as a mayde
He neuer yet vilayns Worde sayde
In al his lif to nomaner Wight
He Was a gentil parfight knyght
For to telle you of his aray
His hors Were gode but he Was not gay
Of fustian he Wered a gipioun
Al be smetedy With his habergeon
For he Was late come fro his viage
And sente for to do his pilgremage
With hym ther Was a femely yong squyer
A louer and a lusti bacheler
With lockis crulle as they Were leyd in presse
Of twenty yer of age he Was I gesse
Of his stature he Was of euene lenghte
And Wonderly deliuer & greet of strenghte
And he hady be som tyme in chyualrye
In Flaundris in Artoise and in Picardye
And bory hym Wel as of a litil space

In hope to ſtonden in his ladies grace
Enbrouded was he as it were a mede
Al ful of freſſh flouris white and rede
Syngynge he was or floytynge al day
He was as freſſh as is the moneth of may
Short was his gowne with ſleuys longe & wyde
Wel couthe he ſitte on hors & therto fair ryde
He couthe ſongy make and wel endyte
Juſte and daunce portreye and eke wryte
So hote he louedy that he nyghtertale
He ſlepte nomore than a nyghtyngale
Curteys he was lowly and ſeruiſabyl
He carf beforn his fader at the tabyl
A Yeman hadde he and ſeruauntis nomo
At that tyme for he liſt to ryde ſo
And he was cledy in cote and hoody of grene
A ſheef of arwes bright and ſhene
Under his belt he baar ful thriftely
Wel coude he dreſſe his takyl yomanly
His arwis droupedy not with fetheris lowe
And in his hondy he baar a mighty bowe
A not hedy he hadde with a brown viſage
Of wodemannes craft coude he al the vſage
Op on his arme he bare a gay bracer
And by his ſide a ſwerdy and a bokeler
And on that other ſide a gay daggere
Harneyſedy wel and ſharp as point of ſpere
A Criſtofir on his breſt ful ſhene
An hozy he baar a baldrykt grene

A forster Was he sothly as I gesse
There Was also a nome a prioresse
That of hir smylynge Was simpil & coy
Here gretteste oth Was be seynt loy
And she Was clepid dame Eglentyn
Ful Wel she songh seruise diuine
Entoyned in hir Nos ful semely
And frensh she spak ful fetously
After the scole of stratforde at the bowe
For frensh of Paris Was to hir vnknowe
At mete Wel taught Was she With al
She lete no morsel fro hir lippis fal
Ne Wete hire fingres in hir sauce depe
Wel coude she carry a morsel of mete
That no drope fil on hir breste
In curtesie Was set ful mykil hir leste
Hir ouerlippe Wiped she so clene
That in hir cup ther Was no ferthyngh sene
Of grece Whan she hadde dronke her draught
Ful semely after hir mete she raught
And sikirly she Was of greet disport
Of plesaunce and amyable of port
And peyned hire to countrefete chiere
Of court to be statly of manere
And to be holde digne of reuerence
But for to speke of hir conscience
She Was so charitable and so pietous
She Wolde Wepe and she saW a mous
KaWght in a trappe if it Were deed or bledde

Of ſmale houndis hadde ſhe that ſhe fedde
With roſt fleſh mylke and wastel bredy
But ſore wepte ſhe if ony of hem were dedy
Or if men ſmoot hem with yerdy ſmert
And al was conſcience and tendir hert
Ful ſemely hir wympil pynchedy was
Her nose tretiſe hire yen grey as glas
Her mouth ſmal and therto ſofte and redy
But ſikirly ſhe hadde a fair forheedy
It was almoſt a ſpan brodeJ twolk
For hardly ſhe was not vnder growk
Ful fetice was her cloke asJ was waar
Of ſmal coral aboute her harm ſhe haar
A peyre of bedis gaudedy al with grene
And there on hough a broche ful ſhene
On whiche that firſt was wryte a cromedy A
And aftir that amor vincit omnia
Another nonne with hir ther was
Ful fair of helde and bright of faas
That was her chapeleyn and preſtis thre
A monk ther was fair for the maiſtre
Whiche afore that tyme hadde be
Ay out ryder he louedy venorie
A manly man to be an abbot able
Ful many a deynte hors hadde he in ſtabil
And whey he wody men mighte his bridil here
Syngelynge ¿ whiſtelinge in the wyndy clere
And eke as lolde as doth the chapel belle
There as the lordy was keper of the celle

The reule of saint Maure & of saint Benet
Be cause he held it somwhat streyt
This ilke monk lete olde thinges passe
And held after the newe Worlde the space
He yaf not of the text a pullet hemme
That seith that hunters be not holy men
Ne that a monk whemme that he is rechelees
Is lik to a fish whey it is waterlees
This is to say a monk oute of a cloistre
But that texte holde I not worth an oistre
And I say that his opinion was goode
What shulde he studye and make hym woode
Up on a book alwey in cloistre to poure
Or swynke with hondis and laboure
As austyn bide. but how shal the Worlde be serued
Let austyn haue his swynk to hym reserued
Therfore he was a pricasour a right
Grehoundis he hadde as mylke whit
Of prykynge and of huntynge for the hare
Was al his lust for no thinge Wolde he spare
I saw his sleuys purfiled at the hond
With grise and that the fyneste of a lond
And for to fastyn his hood vnder the chynne
He hadde of golde wrought a curious pynne
And eke his face as he had be anoynt
He was a lord fat and in good point
His yen steep and rollynge in his heed
That stemyd as a furneys of leed
His bootis souplil his hors in gret estate

Nolw certenly he was a fein prelate
He was not pale as a forpyned goost
A fat swan louedy he best of ony wost
His palfrey was as broun as a bery
A Freere ther was a wanton & a mery
A lympytour andy a ful solemne man
In alle the ordris four is noy that so wel can
So moche of daliaunce andy fair langage
He hadde made meny a fair mariage
Of yonge wommen at his owen cost
Vntil his ordre he was an nobil post
Ful welbelouedy andy ful famulier was he
With frankeleyns ouer al in his contre
And with worthy yemen of the toun
For he hadde power of confession
And pleasaunt was his absolucion
To them that hady grete contricion
And sayde hym self more than a curat
And of his ordre he was licenciat
And andy esi may to yeue penaunce
There he wiste to haue goody pitaunce
Vnto a poure ordre forto yeue
Whan that a man is wel I shryue
Yf he yaf he durste make a vaunt
Yf that a man was repentaunt
Many a man so hardy is of herte
He may not wepe though he sore smerte
Therfore in stede of wepynge andy praiers
Men moste yeue siluer to the poure freris

His tipet was ffoffid ful of knyuys
And with pynnys to yeue faire wyuys
And certeyn he hadde a merry note
Merily coude he fynge and pleye at the rote
Of tidyngis he kaar betterly the pyce
Milk whit he was as the flour delyce
Therto strongh he was as a champioun
And knelw the tauernys wel in euery toun
And euery osteler and tapstere
Better than a lazer or a kaggestere
Forto vnto suche a man as he
Acordith not as by his faculte
To haue of suche sike lazers acqueyntaunce
It is not honest it may not a vaunce
Forto dele with suche poraille
But with riche and sellers of vitaille
And ouer al there as richesse sholde arise
Curteis he was and lowly of seruise
Ther was no man nowhere so vertuous
He was the beste beggere in his hous
For though a wydowe hadde not a shoo
So plesaunt was his in principio
Yet wolde he haue a ferthing or he went
His purchace was bettir than his rent
And harke he couthe as it were a whelpe
In louedayes there coude he mykyl helpe
For there he nas lik a cloisterer
With a threedbare cope as a poure frere
But he was like a maister or a pope

Of dubbyl Worſtede Was his ſemy cope
That wondy Was as a belle out of preſſe
Somwhat he liſpydy for his Wantowdneſſe
To make his engliſh ſWete Up ony his tunge
Andy in his harpynge Whan he hady J ſunge
His yen twynklydy in his hedy a right
As dony the ſterris in the frosty nyght
This Worthy freere Was callydy hubberdy
A Marchaunt ther Was With a forkidy berdy
In motley ony high ony his hozs he ſat
Up ony his hedy a flaundres breuer hat
His bootis claſpidy feire andy fetously
His reſons he ſpak ful ſolempnely
Sowynge alWey the encrece of his Wynnynge
He Wolde the ſee Were kept for ony thynge
Betwixt Middelburgh andy Orewelle
Wel coude he in his eſchaunges ſelle
This Worthy man his Witte ful Wel beſette
Ther Wiſte no Wight that he Was in dette
So eſtatly Was he of gouernaunce
With his bargayns andy With his cheueſaunce
For ſothe he Was a Worthy man With alle
But ſoth to ſay J not howe men hym calle
Clerk ther Was of Oxenforde alſo
That vnto logik hadde longe J go
As lene Was his hozs as a rake
Andy he Was not right fat J vndertake
But lokydy holow andy therto ſobirly
Ful threedbare Was his oureſt courtby

For he hadde gote hym yet no benefice
Ne was not worldly to haue an office
For hym was leuyr to haue at his beddis hed
Twenty bokys J clady in whit and redy
Of Aristotle and of philosophie
Than Robis riche or fidil or sawtrie
But al be that he was a philosophre
Yet hadde he but litil gold in cofre
But al that he might of his frendis haue help
On bokis and on lernynge he it spent
And besely gan for the soulis praye
Of hem that yaf hym wherwith to scolaye
Of study took he most cure and hede
Not a word spak he more than nede
Short and quyk and high of sentence
Sownyng moral vertu was his prudence
And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche
And ther with ful softe was his speche
A Sergeante of lawe waar and wise
Was there that ofte hadde be at the payse
That was also riche of excellence
Discrete he was and of gret reuerence
He semyd suche his wordis were so wise
Justice he was ful ofte in assise
By patent and by playn commission
For his science and his high renoun
Of fees and robis hadde he many on
So gret a purchasour was ther nowher non
Al was fee symple to hym in effect

His purchace mighte not be to hym ſuſpect
No Where ſo beſy a man as he ther Was
And yet he ſemyd beſier than he Was
In termes hade he caas & domes alle
That fro the tyme of kyng William Were falle
Therto he coude endite and make a thing
Ther coude no Wight pynche at his Writing
And euery ſtatut coude he pleyn be rote
He rood but homely in a medle cote
Gird With a ſeynt of ſilk With barres ſmale
Of his aray telle I no lenger tale
A Frankeleyn Was in his companye
White Was his berd as the deyſie
And of his complexion Was ſanguyn
Wel loued he be the morow a cup Wyn
To lyue in delite Was euer his Wone
For he Was Epicuriees owen ſone
That held opinion that pleyn delite
Was verray felicite parfite
An houſholder and that a gret Was he
Saynt Julian he Was in his contre
His breed his ale Was alWey after one
A better hyned man Was nowher none
Without bake mete Was he neuer in his hous
His fiſſh his fleſſh and that ſo plentuous
It chelde in his hous of mete and drynke
Of alle deyntees that men couthe thynke
After the ſundry ſeſon of the yeer
So chaunged he his mete and his ſoper

Ful many a fat partrich hadde he in mewe
And many a bream and luce in stewe
Wo was his cook but his sauce were
Poynant and sharp and redy al his geer
His table dormaunt in his halle alway
Was redy couered al the longe day
At sessions ther was he lord and sire
Ful often tyme he was knyght of the shire
A lace and a gipser of silk
Hyng at his girdil as white as morwe mylk
A sherreue hadde he be and a coronour
Was nowhere suche a worthy vavesour
An haberdassher and a carpenter
A webbe a dyer and a tapiser
And they were clothed alle in o lyuere
Of a solempne and a greet fraternite
Ful freshly and newe her geer piked was
Here knyues chapid were not with bras
But al with siluer wrought ful clene & wel
Here girdelis and here pouchis euerydel
Wel semed eche of hem a fair burgeis
To sitten in the yeldy halle at the deys
Enerich for the wisedom that he can
Was happely forto be an aldirman
For catel hadde they ynow and rent
And here wyues wolde it wel assent
And elles certayn they were to blame
Hit is ful fair to be callyd madame
And go to vigilis al before

And haue a mantel rially I bore
A Cook they hadde with hem for the nonys
To boylle the chekens & the mary bonys
And poudr marchaunt tart and galingale
Wel knew he a draughte of london ale
He coude roste sethe boyle and frye
Make mortrewys and wel bake a pye
But gret harm was it as it thoughte me
For on his shynne a Marmoyl hadde he
And blank Manger made he with the best
A Shipman was ther that wonede fer be west
For ought I woot he was of dertemouth
He wode vp a mullock as he coueth
In a gowne fol dynge to the kne
Dagger and a lace hangynge hadde he
Aboute his necke vnder his arm adoun
The hote somer hadde made his hewe al broun
And certaynly he was a good felawe
Ful many a draughte wyn he hadde drawe
Fro burdeux ward whyle the chapman sleep
Of conscience took he no keep
If ful many a tatayle in that londe
He faught and hadde the higher honde
By his craft to reken wel his tyde
His stremys and his daungers hym be side
Ther was non suche from hul to Cartage
For wyse he was though he were ful of corage
Hardy he was and vnder taake
With many a tempest his berde hath quake

He knelb alle the hauenes that ther Were
Fro yngelondy in to the Capfeneſter
Andy euery ryke in bretayne andy in ſpayne
His barge Was calledy the Maudeleyne
With vs there Was a doctour of phiſik
In the Worlde Was ther noȝ hym lik
To ſpeke of phiſik andy furgerye
For he Was groundidy in Aſtronomye
He kepte his paciente a greet deel
In hour he magik naturreel
Wel outhe he of fortune the accident
Of his ymage for his pacient
He knelb the cauſe of euery maladye
Were it of coldy hete moyſt or drye
Andy Were engendredy of What humour
He Was a lery parfight practeſour
The cauſe he knelb andy of his harmy the rote
Anoȝ he yaf the ſikman his bote
For redy alWay he his apotecaryes
To ſende hym druggges & his lettelbaryes
For eche of them made other forto Wynne
Her frendſchip Was not nelbe to begynne
Ful Wel knelb he the olde Eſtulapius
Andy diaſcoridy andy eke Platearius
Olde ypocras, haly andy eke Galiene
Serapioȝ Raſis andy eke Auicene
Anoȝwis damaſcene andy Conſtantyn
Bernardy Gatiſdey andy Gilbertyn
Of his diete meſurable Was he

For it was of no superfluyte
But of greet norisshinge and digestible
His stody was but litil on the bybyle
In sangwey and in perce I clad with alle
Lyned with taffata and whit sandalle
And litil he was of his dispence
He kepte that he wan in the pestelence
For gold in phisik is a cordial
Therfore he loued gold in special

A Good wif ther was of beside bathe
And she was somdeel deef & þ was scathe
Of cloth makynge had she suche an haunt
She passid hem of ypre or of gaunt
In al the parisshe wif was ther non
That to the offrynge before hir sholde goon
And if ther did certayn wroth was she
Than was she oute of al charite
Her kercheuys ful fyn were of ground
I durste swere they weyed thre pound
That on a sunday were on hir hed
Hir hosyn were of fyne scarlet red
Ful streyte I teyd and shoos ful newe
Bold was her face fair & red of hewe
She was a worthy woman al hir lyue
Husbondis at the chirche dore hadde she fyue
Withoute other companye in youthe
But ther of nedith not to speke as nowthe
At acres had she been and at Jherusaleme
She had passid thouron many a strange reme

At Rome she hadȝ be andȝ at Babiloyne
At saint James in Galis andȝ at Coloyne
She coude moche of Wandrynge in the Weȝ
Gap toothid Was she sothlȝ to seȝ
Vp on an Ambeler ful eselȝ she sat
I Wymplid Welꝛ on hir hedȝ an hat
As brodȝ as it Were a bokeler oꝛ a targe
A foot mantil aboute hir hippis large
Andȝ on hir helis a peire of sporis sharpe
In fleschip coude she lawhe andȝ carpe
Of remedyes of loue she counde pchaunce
Foꝛ of that art she coude the daunce
A Goodȝ man ther Was of Religion
Andȝ Was a poure parsoñ of a toun
But riche he Was andȝ holy of Werk
He Was also a lernedȝ manꝛ a clerk
That cristis gospellis trewly Wolde preche
His parischons deuoutly Wolde he teche
Benigne he Was andȝ Wonder diligent
Andȝ in aduersite ful pacient
Andȝ suche he Was prouedȝ ofte sithes
Ful loth Were he to curse foꝛ his tithis
But rathir Wolde he yeue out of doute
Vnto his poure parischons aboute
Of his offringe andȝ of his substenaunce
He coude in litȝl thingȝ haue sufficiaunce
Wide Was his parish andȝ housis fer a sondir
But he let not foꝛ rayn ne foꝛ thundir
In sikneſſe ner in myschief to Visite

The ferreſt in his pariſh more and lȝe
Vp on his feet and in his hond a ſtaf
This nobil enſample vnto his ſheep he yaf
That firſt he wroughte & aftirward taughte
Out of the goſpell the wordis he caughte
And this figure he eikyd therto
That if goldȝ ruſte what ſholde Iren do
For a preeſt to be foul in whom we truſte
No wonder is a lowd man to ruſte
And ſhame it is yf a preeſt take kepe
A ſlotty ſhepherde and a clene ſhepe
Wel oughte a preeſt enſample to yeue
Be his clennesſe how his ſheep ſholde lyue
Be ſette not his benefice to hire
And lete his ſheep acombre in the myre
And renne to londȝ to ſaint Poulis
And ſeke hym a chauntrie for ſoulis
Other with a bretherhede to be withholde
But duelle at hoom and kepe his folde
So that the wolf ne hadde the maiſtrye
He was a ſhepherde and not a mercenarye
And though he holy were and vertuous
He was nat to a ſinfulman to deſpitous
But in his ſpeche diſcreet and benigne
Ne of his techyngȝ daungerous ne digne
To drawe folk to heuen with fairneſſe
Be goodȝ enſampyl this was his beſineſſe
But it were ony perſone obſtinat
Whether he were of high or lowe eſtat

Hym wolde he snybbe sharply for the nonys
A better preest I trowe nowhere non is
He waited after no pompe ne reuerence
He hadde no spiced conscience
But cristis lore and his apostelis twelue
He taughte but first he folowed hym selue
With him ther was a plowman was his brober
That hadde ledd of dungg many a fother
A trewe swynker and a goodd was he
Leuynge in pees and parfit charite
Godd loued he best with al his herte
At alle tymes they he gamed or smerte
And than his neyghebour right as hym self
He wolde thresshe and therto digge and delf
For cristis sake for euery poure wight
Withoute hire if it lay in his myght
His tithes payde he hothe faire and wel
Of his propir swynk and his catel
In a tabard he rood vp on a mere
There was also a reue and eek a Millere
A sompnour and a pardoner also
A Manciple and my self ther was no mo
The millere was a stout carle for the nonys
Ful big he was of brawn and bonys
That proued wel for ouer there he cam
At wrastlynge alwey he wolde haue the ram
He was short shuldred a thicke quarre
Ther was no dore that he nolde heue of the barre
Or breke it at rennynge with his hedd

His herde as ony ſolke or wey was reedy
And therto hroody as it were a ſpade
Vp on the ende of his noſe he hade
A werte and ther ou ſtoody a tuſte of heris
Rede as the hruſtelis of a ſolkes eris
His noſtrellis blak were and wyde
A ſwerdy and a bokeler haar he he his ſyde
His mouth as greet as is a furneys
He was a Jangeler and a ioly hardeys
And that was moſt of ſynne & harlotryes
Wel coude he ſtele corn and tolle thryes
And that he hadde a thombe of goldy parde
A whit cote and a blew hoody werydy he
A bagge pype coude he blowe and ſowne
And therwith he broughte out of towne
A Gentyl Manciplyl was ther of the templyl
Of whiche a catour mighte take enſamplyl
Forto be wyſe in byinge of vitayl
For whether he payde or took be tayl
Algate he wayted ſo on his acate
That he was ay before and in goody ſtate
Now is nat that of gody a fair grace
That ſuche a lewdy mannys witte ſhal pace
The wiſedom of an heep of lernedy men
Of maiſtris hadde he moo than thries ten
That were of lawe expert and corious
Of whiche ther were a doſeyn in that hous
Worthy to be ſtuardis of rente and londe
Of ony lordy that is in Engelondy

To make hym lyue be his owen good
In honour detles but he were wood
Othir lyue scarsely as hym list desire
And forto helpe al the shire
In ony cause that myghte falle or happe
And this mancipiff set al her cappe
Reue ther was a slendir wolerik man
His berd is shaue as nygh as he can
His heris were be his eris wundeJ shore
His top was dockid lik a prest before
Ful longe were his leggis and ful lene
Lik a staf ther nys no calf J sene
Wel coude he kepe a garner and a bynne
Ther was non auditour coude of hym wynne
Wel wiste he be the droughte and be the rayn
The yeldynge of his seed and of his greyn
His lordis sheep his neet and his dirie
His swyne his hors his stoor and his pultrie
Was hoolly in this reuys gouernynge
And by his couenaunt yaf the rekenynge
Seth his lord was twenty yeer of age
Ther coude noman brynge hym in serage
Ther nas bailly ne noon other hyne
That coude his sleyghte or his couyne
They were of hym a drad as of the deth
His wonynge was fair vp on an heth
With grene treys shadwed was his place
He coude better than his lord purchace
Ful riche he was astored pryuely

His lordy he coude pleaſe diſcretly
To yeue ayen to hym of his owen goody
Andy haue thank & yet acote andy ay hody
In yongthe he hadde lernedy a goody myſtere
He Was a Wel goody Wright a Carpentere
This reue ſat Upon a Wel goody ſtot
That Was al pomel gray andy highte ſcot
A longy ſurcote of Pers Up on hym he hadde
Andy by his ſyde he baar a ruſty bladde
Of Norfolk Was this reue of Whiche I telle
Be ſyde a towy men calle BaldiſWelle
Tuckydy he Was as is a frere aboute
Andy euer he wody the hynderest of the rowte
A Sompnour With Us Was in that place
That hadde a redy cherubyn face
For ſalWſſleme he Was With yey narow
Hoot he Was andy likerous as a ſparow
With blake browes ſkallidy andy pilledy berdy
Of his Viſage childrey Were a ferdy
Ther nas quykſiluer litarge ne brenſtone
Borace ceruſe ne oyle of tartre none
Ne oynement that ichith or byte
That mighte helpe of his Welkis White
Ne of his knobbis ſittynge in his chekys
Weel louedy he onyons garleek andy lekys
Andy forto drynke redy Wyne as redy as bloody
Than Wolde he ſpeke & crye as he Wer Wody
Andy Whan he hadde Wel dronke the Wyn
Than Wolde he ſpeke no Wordy but latyn

A fewe termes hadde he two or thre
That he hadde lerned of fum man of degre
No wondir is he herde it al the day
And eke ye knowe wel that a Jay
Can clepe watte as wel as the pope
But who coude hym in other thingis grope
Than hadd he spent al his philosophie
A questio quid queris wolde he crye
He was a gentil harlot and a kynde
A better felow sholde noman fynde
He wolde suffre for a quart of wyn
A good felow to haue his concubyn
A twelf monthe & excuse hym at the fulle
Ful pryuely a finche eke coude he pulle
And yf he fond owher a good felawe
He wolde teche hym anon to haue awe
In suche caas of the archedekenes curs
But yf mannys soule were in his purs
For in his purs he sholde punysshyd be
Purs is the archedekenes helle sayde he
But wel I woot he lieth in dede
Of cursynge oughte eche man to drede
For cursynge wil slee right as sowlyng slaueth
And also ware hym of significamt
In daunger hadde he at his owen gise
Alle the yonge girlis of the diocyse
And knew of hir counseil & was of her rede
A garlond he hadde set vp on his hede
As greet as it were an alestake

A ſomeler hadde he maad hym of a Cake
With hym ther wood a gentil pardoner
Of vncyuale his frend & his comper
That ſtreight was come fro the pope of Rome
Ful lowde he ſong com hidir lene grom
This ſompnour bar to hym a ſtyf burdon
Was neuer trompe of half ſo greet a ſoun
This pardoner hadde heer as yelow as Wex
And ſmothe it hyng as doth a ſtrike of flex
By ounces hyng his lockis that he hadde
And there with his ſholdris ouer ſpradde
But thay it lay be Culpous one and one
Ay hood for cold wered he none
For it was truſſed vp on his Walet
Hym thoughte he wood vp on the nebe get
Diſſheuyld ſaue his cappe he wood al bare
Suche glarynge yen hadde he as hath any hare
His Walet beforn hym had he in his lappe
A fernacle hadde he ſolid vp on his cappe
Bretful of pardon com fro Rome al hoot
A vois he hadde as ſmal as hath a goot
No berd hadde he ne neuer ſholde haue
As moche was it as it were nebe ſchaue
I trowe he were a geldyng or a mare
But of his craft from Berwik vnto Ware
Ne was ther nowher ſuche a pardoner
For in his male he hadde a pilow beer
Which that he ſayde was our ladies ſeyl
He ſayde he hadde a gobet of the ſeyl

That ſaint Petir hadde When that he Went
Up on the ſe til Jeſus crist hym ſent
He hadde a cros of latoun ful of ſtones
And in a glas he hadde piggis bones
But With thiſe reliques When that he fond
A poure perſon dWellynge Up on lond
Up on a day he gat hym more mone
Than the perſon gat in monethis three
And thus hath he feyned flateriez & Japis
He made the parſon and the peple his apis
But trewli to telle at the laſt
He Was in chirche an noble eccleſiaſt
Well coude he rede a leſſon or a ſtory
But alderbeſt he ſong an offretory
For Wel he Wiſte When that ſong Was ſunge
He moſte preche and fle a While his tunge
To Wynne ſilver as he Wel can
Therfore he ſong the merier than
NOW haue I tolde you ſhortly in a clauſe
The ſtate the aray the nombre & the cauſe
Why that aſſembled Was this companye
In Southwerk at this gentil hoſtelrye
That highte the Taberd faſte by the Belle
But nou is tyme to you forto telle
How that We bare Vs that ilke nyght
When that We Were in the hoſtry alight
And after Wil I telle of our viage
And al the remenaunt of our pilgremage
But firſt I you pray of your curteſye

That ye ne reken nat my vilonye
Though that I playnly speke in this matere
To telle you here wordis and hir chere
And though I speke here wordis propirly
For this ye knowe as wel as I
Who shal a tale telle after a man
He moste reherce as nere as he can
Euery word yf it be in his charge
Al speke he so rudely and so large
Or ellis he moste telle his tale vntrewe
Or feyn thyngis or feyne wordis newe
He may not spare al though he were his brothir
He moot as wel say o word as anothir
Crist spak hym self ful brode in holy writ
And wel ye woot no vilany is it
Eke plato saith who so can it rede
The word moste be cosyn to the dede
Also I pray you for yeue it me
Al though I sette not folk in her degre
Here in thyse tales as they shold stonde
My wit is short ye may wel vnderstonde
Ret chere made our ost to vs euerichon
And to sopere sette vs anon
He serued is with vitayle at the beste
Strong was the wyne & drynke vs liste
A semely man our host was with alle
For to be a marchal in a lordes halle
A large man he was with eyen stepe
A fayrer burgeys is ther non in chepe

Bold of his speche and wel was I taught
And of manhood lacked he right nought
Eke therto was he right a mery man
And after soper to pleyn he began
And spak of myrthe among other thinges
Whan that we hadde made our rekenynges
He sayde thus now lordynges trewly
Ye be to me right welcome hertely
For be my trouthe yf I shal not ly
I sawe not this yeer so mery a companye
At onys in this herbergh as now
Feyne wolde I do you myrthe yf I wiste how
And of my myrthe I am right now bethought
To do you ese and it shal coste you nought
Ye go to Caunterbury god you spede
The blisful martir quyte your mede
And wel ye woot as ye go be the weye
Ye shappyn you to talke and to pleye
For trewly comfort ne myrthe is non
To ride be the wey dom as a stoon
And therfore wil I make you disport
As I sayde erst and do you comfort
And if it liketh you alle be on assent
For to stonde at my iugement
And forto werke as I shal you say
To morwe whan ye ridyn on the way
Now be my fader soule that is ded
But ye be mery I shal yeve you my hed
Holdyn vp your hondes without more speche

Our counsel shal not longe be to seche
Vs thoughte it was not worth to make vs wyse
And graunted hym without more avyse
And bad hym saye his verdit as hym list
Lordynges qd he now herkeneth for the best
But take it not I pray you in disdeyne
This is the poynt to speke it shortt & pleyne
That eche of you to shorte with your weye
In this viage shal telle talis tweye
To Cauntirburyward I mene it so
And homward he shal telle other talis to
Of auenturis that whilom have befalle
And whiche of you berith hym best of alle
That is to sey that telleth in this case
Tales of best sentence and most solace
Shal have a soper of oure alther cost
Here in this place sittynge by this post
Whan that ye come ayen from Caunterbury
And forto make you the more mery
I wil my self go with you and ryde
Right at myn owen cost and be your gyde
And who that wol my iugement withsay
Shortly shal paye all that is spent be the way
And if ye vouchesauf that it be soo
Tel me anone without wordis moo
And I wil erely shape me therfore
This thing was graunted & othis swore
With ful glad herte & preyen hym also
That he wolde vouchesauf to do so

And that he wolde be our gouernour
And of oure talis Juge and reportour
And sette a soper at a certayn pryce
And wol be wel-lid at his deuyce
Hich and lowe and alle be on assent
We be accorded to the Jugement
And there vp on the wyne was fet anone
We dronk and to reste went we echone
Withoute euy lenger tarynge
Amorwe when the day gan sprynge
Vp wos our host and was al our ost
And gadred vs alle in a flok
And forth we riden litel more than a pas
Vnto the Waterynge of saint Thomas
And there oure hoste gan his hors areste
And sayde harkeneth lordingez yf ye liste
Ye woot our forward and I you recorde
Yf euensong and morwe song accorde
Let se now who shal telle the first tale
As euer moot I drynke wyne or ale
Who so wil be rebel to my iugement
Shal paye for al that is be the way spent
Now draw cut or that ye further twynne
Whiche shal the first tale begynne
Sire knyght quod he my maister & my lord
Draw-with-out for that is myn accord
Cometh hithir quod he my lady Prioresse
And ye sire clerk let be your shamefastnesse
Ne study not ley on hond euery man

Anon to withdrawe euery wight began
And shortly to telle as it was
Were it be auenture fortune or caas
The soth is this the aut fil on the knyght
Of whiche ful blithe & glady is euery wight
And telle he moste as it was reson
Be forward and be compsicion
As ye haue herd what nedith wordis moo
And whan this good man saw that it was soo
As he that was wyse and obedient
To kepe his forward be his fre assent
He sayde sithnes I shal begynne the game
What welcom be aut a goddis name
Nowe lat vs ryde & herkyn what I say
And with that word we ridey forth on the way
And he began with right a mery chere
And sayde anone his tale as ye shul here

Here begynneth the knyghtis tale.

Whilom as olde story telleth vs
Ther was a duke that highte Theseus
Of thebes he was lord and gouernour
And in his tyme suche a conquerour
That greter was ther none vnder sonne
Ful many a riche contre had he wonne
That with his wisedom and chiualrye
He conquered al the regne of femenye
That whilom was cleped Cithea
And wedded the quene Ipolita
And broughte hir home in to his contre

With moche glorie and solempnite
And eke hir yonge suster Emelye
And thus with victory and melodye
Lete I this worthy duke to Athenes ryde
And al his oost in armes hym besyde
And certis if it nere to longe to here
I wolde have tolde fully the matere
How wonne was the regne of femenye
By Theseus and by his chevalrye
And of the grete bataille for the nonys
Betwix athenes and amasones
And how besieged was Ipolita
The faire lady quene of Cithea
And of the feste that was at hir weddynge
And of the tempest at hir hom comynge
But al thinge I moot as now forbere
I have gode woot a large feld to ere
And wek ley the oxen in the plow
The remenant of my tale is longe ynow
I wil not lette eke none of this rowte
Let every felow telle his tale aboute
And let se now who shal the souper wynne
And there I lefte I wil agayn begynne

This duke of whom I make mencion
When he was come almost in to the toun
In al his welthe and his most pryde
He was ware as he cast his ye aside
Where that ther kneled in the high wey
A companye of ladies tweye and tweye

Eche aftir other clothed in clothes blake
But ſuche a cry and ſuche a woo they make
That in this worlde nys creature lyuynge
That herde ſuche an other weymentynge
And of this cry they wolde neuer ſtentyn
Tyl they the reynys of his bridyl hentyn
What folk be ye that at myn hom comynge
Perturbe me and my feſte with cryynge
Quod Theſeus haue ye ſo gret enuye
Of myn honour that thus compleyne & crye
Or who hath you myſboden or offended
Tel me and it ſhal be amended
And why that ye be clothed thus in blak
The eldeſt lady of hem alle ſpak
Whanne ſhe hadde ſwolwned with a dedly chere
That it was rowthe to ſee and to here
She ſayde lord to whom fortune hath yeue
Victory and as a conqueroure to lyue
Nought greueth vs your glory & your honour
But we beſeke you of mercy and ſocour
Haue mercy on our woo and diſtreſſe
Som drope of pyte for thy gentilneſſe
Up on vs wrecchid wommen let now falle
For certis lord ther is non of vs alle
That ſhe ne hath be a duchеſſe or a quene
Now be we caytifs as it is wel ſene
I thanked be fortune and hir fals wheel
That non aſtat enſureth to be weel
Now certis lord to abyde your preſence

Here in this temple of goddis clemence
We haue be waytinge al this fourtenyght
Now help vs lordy seth it is in thy might
I wrecchedy wight that wepe thus
Was somtyme wif of Campaneus
That starf at Thebes acursidy be that day
Andy alle we that ley in this aray
Andy make al this lamentacion
We lostey alle our husbondis in that town
Whiles the sege there aboute lay
Andy yet now the olde aceon wel away
That lordy is now of Thebes that cyte
Fulfilledy of ire andy iniquyte
He for despit andy his tirannye
To do the dedy bodyes vilonye
Of alle our lordis whiche that ley slawe
Hath alle the bodyes on an heep ydrawe
Andy wol not suffre hem be non assent
Neyther to be buryedy ne to be brent
But makith houndis to ete hem in despyt
Andy with that wordy without more respyt
They fallen grovelynge andy crye pitously
Haue on vs wrechidy wommen som mercy
Andy let our sorow synke in thy hert
This gentil duke of his courser stert
With herte pitous whenne he herde hem speke
Hym thoughte his herte wolde breke
Whan he sawh hem so pitous andy so mate
That whilom were of so greet astate

And in his armes he hem alle vp hent
And hem comforted in ful good entent
And swore his oth as he was trewe knyght
He wolde do so ferforth his myght
Vp on the tiraunt Creon hym to wreke
That al the pepyl of grece sholde speke
Holw Creon was of Theseus y serued
As he that hath his deth wel deserued
And right anon Withouten more abood
His baner he displayde and forth he rood
To Thebes ward and al his oste besyde
No ner Athenes nolde he goo ne ryde
Ne take his ese nat fully half a day
But on his wey that nyght he lay
And sente anon Ipolita the quene
And Emely hir yonge suster shene
Vnto the toun of Athenes to dwelle
And forth he rideth ther is nomore to telle
The wode the stant With spere and targe
So shyneth in his Whit baner large
That alle the feldis glitteren vp and down
And he his baner bore is his penon
Of gold ful riche in Whiche ther was Ibete
The Mytay Whiche he wan in crete
This riche duke this riche conquerour
And in his oste of chiualrye the flour
Tyl that he cam to Thebes and a lighte
Fer in a feld there as he thoughte to fighte
But shortly to speke of this thyng

With Creon whiche was of thebes kyng
He faught and slowh hym manly as a knyght
In playn bataille and put his folk to fight
And at a salwe he wan the cyte aftir
And rente a wuy wal sparre and raftir
And to the ladyes he restored ageyn
The bodyes of her husbondis that were sleyn
To do obsequyes as tho was the gyse
But it were al to long to wuyse
The gret clamour and the weymentyng
That the ladyes made at the burrying
Of the bodyes and the grete honour
That Theseus the nobil conquerour
Dooth to the ladyes when they fro hym went
But shortly forto telle is myn entent
When that this worthy duke this Theseus
Hath Creon slayn and wan Thebes thus
Stille in the felde he took al nyght his rest
And dide with al the contre right as hym list
He ransaked in the taas of bodyes dede
Hem for to strype of harneis and of wede
The pilours dide hir besinesse and cure
Aftir the bataille and the discomfiture
And befil that in that taas they fond
Thorwh girt with meny a greuous wound
Two yonge knyghtis lyyng by and by
Bothe in one harneis wrought ful richely
Of whiche two arcite highte that one
And the other highte Palamon

Not fully quyk ne fully ded they were
But by hir cotearmur and by hir gere
The herowdes knewh hem best in special
Alas that they were of the blood ryal
Of Thebes and of sustryn two ybore
Out of the taas the pilours haue hem tore
And haue hem caried in to the tent
Of Theseus and he ful sone hem sent
To Athenes to dwelle there in prison
Perpetuel he nolde no raunson
And whan this worthy duke hadde thus don
He took his ost and hom he goth anon
With laurer crowned as a conquerour
And there he lyueth in ioye and in honour
Terme of his lif what nedith wordis moo
And in a tour with anguysh and with woo
Dwelleth Palamon and arcite
For euermore ther may no man hem quyte
Thus passed yeer he yeer day he day
Tyl it fyl oues in a morwynge of may
That Emely that fairer was to se
Than is the lily vp on the stalk tree
And fresscher than may with flouris newe
For with the rose colour strof hir hewe
I not whiche was the feirer of hem two
Er it was day as was her wont to do
She was aryseu and al redy dight
For may wol haue no slogardy a nyght
The seson pricketh euery gentyl herte

And maketh it out of his ſlepe to ſterte
And ſithnes a ryſe to do hir obſeruaunces
This makith Emely to haue remembraunces
To do honoure to may and for to ryſe
I clothed freſſh was ſhe to deuyſe
Her yelow heer was broided on a tres
Be hynd her bak a long yerd I ges
And in the gardyn at the ſonne vpriſt
She walked vp and doun as hir liſt
She gadred flowris part white and rede
To make a ſubtyl chapelet for hir hed
And as an aungel heuenly ſhe ſonge
The grete tour that was ſo thicke and ſtronge
Whiche of the caſtel was chief dungeoun
There as the knyghtis weren in priſoun
Of whiche I tolde you and telle ſhal
Was euene ioynant to the caſtel wall
There as this Emely had her pleyyng
Bryght was the ſonne & cleer in that morwyng
And Palamon this woful priſoner
As was his wone by leue of his gailer
Was riſen and romed in the chambir on hy
In whiche al the noble cyte he ſy
And eke the gardyn ful of braunchis grene
There as freſſh Emely the ſhene
Was in hir walk & romed vp and doun
This ſorowful priſoner this Palamoun
Goth in the chambir to and fro
And to hym ſelf compleyned of his wo

That he Was borñ ful ofte he ſayde allas
And ſo he fyl he auenture and caas
That thorowh a Wyndowh thikke of many a barre
Of yren greet and ſquaar as ony ſparre
He caſt his yen vp on Emelia
And ther With as he blente he cryde a
As though he Were ſtongyn to the hert
And With that cry arráte anone vp ſtert
And ſayde coſyn myn What eileth the
That art ſo pale and dedly on to ſee
Why cryeſt thou Who hath do the offence
For goddis loue take al ín pacience
Our priſon for it may non other be
Fortune hath yeue vs this aduerſite
Or ellis ſom Wikked aſpect or diſpoſicion
Of ſaturne be ſom conſtillacion
Hath yeue vs this al they We had borñ
So ſtood the heuene Whan We Were borñ
We moſte endure this is the ſhort and playn
This Palamon anſWerd and ſayde agayn
Coſyn forſothe of this oppínion
Thou haſt a feyn ymagínacion
This priſon cauſid me not to crye
But I Was hurt noWh thurgh myn eye
Vnto my hert that Wol my bane be
The fairneſſe of a lady that I ſee
Yonder ín the gardyn romynge to and froo
Is cauſe of my cryynge and my Woo
I not Whether ſhe be Wommay or goddeſſe

But venus it is sothly as I gesse
And therwith al on knees doun he fil
And sayde venus yf it be thy wil
Yow in this gardyn thus to transfygure
Before me sorowful wrecche thy creature
Out of this prison help that we may scape
And if it be my destenye so to hape
Be ctery worlde to dye in prison
Of our lynage haue som compassion
That is so lowe I brought be tyrannye
And with that word arcyte gan espye
Where as the lady wente to and fro
And with that sighte her beaute hurte hym so
That yf palamon were wounded sore
Arcite is hurt as moche as he or more
And with a sigh he sighed pitously
The fresh beaute slal sle me sodenly
Of hire that cometh in the yonder place
And but I haue hir mercy and hir grace
That I may se her at the leste wey
I am but ded ther is no more to sey
This palamon when he thise wordis herd
Dispitously he loketh and answerd
Wether sayst thow this in erneste or in play
Nay quod arcite in erneste be my fay
God helpe so me lust ful lityl to play
This palamon gan knytte his browis tway
Hit were quod he to the no gret honour
For to be fals ne to be a traitour

To me that am thy cosyn and thy brother
I swor̃ ful depe and eche of vs to other
That neuer forto dien in the peyn
Tyl that the deth departe shal vs tweyn
Neither in loue to hyndre other
Ne in no euil caas my leue brother
But that thou sholdest truly further me
In euery caas as I sholde further the
This was thyn oth and myn certayn
I woot it wel thou darst it not withsayn
Thus art thou of my counsel without doute
And nowe thou woldist falsly be aboute
To loue my lady whom I loue and serue
And ayr shal tyl myn herte sterue
Now certis fals arcite thou shalt not soo
I louedy hir first and tolde the my woo
As to my counseyl and to my brother swor̃
I suppose thou louedist hir here befor̃
Wost thou not wel the olde clerkis salwe
That who shal yeue a louer ony lawe
Loue is gretter lawe be my pawne
Than may be yeue to ony erthly manne
And therfore positif lawe in suche degre
Is broken alday for loue in eche degre
A man moste nedis loue maugre his hedy
He may not flee it though he sholde be dedy
Al be she mayde widowe or wyf
And eke it is not likly al thy lyf
To stonde in her grace nomore shal I

For wel thou woost thy self verily
That thou and I be dampned to prison
Perpetually vs gayneth no raunson
We stryue as dide the houndis for the bone
They faught alday and yet her part was none
Ther cam a curre while that they were so wroth
And baar awey the bone betwix hem both
And therfore at the kyngis court my broder
Eche man for hym self there is non other
Loue yf thou list for I loue and shal
And sothly lief broder this is al
Here in this prison moste we endure
And euery of vs take his auenture
Gret was the stryf & long betwix hem twey
Yf that I hadde leyser forto sey
But to the effect it happed on a day
To telle it shortly as I may
A worthy duke that highte Parotheus
That felow was to duke Theseus
But of that story list me not to endite
Duke Parotheus loued wel arcite
And hadde hym knowe at thebes yeer be yeer
And finally at the request and praier
Of Parotheus without euy raunson
Duke Theseus leet hym out of prison
Frely to go where hym list ouer al
In suche a gyse as I you telle shal
This was the forward playnly to endite
Betwix duke Theseus and arcite

That if so were that arcite were founde
Euer in his lyf be day or be stounde
In ony contre of this duke Theseus
And he were caught it was acorded thus
That with a swerd he sholde lese his hed
Ther was non oher remedy ne reed
But takith his leue & homward hym spedde
Let hym kepaar his lyf lith to wedde
Hit were a gret thing to telle and to witte
Holw greet sorow nolw suffrith arcite
Nolw is me shappy eternally to dwelle
Nought in purgatory but in helle
Allas that euer knew I paroteus
For ellis hadde I duelt with Theseus
I fetered in his prison with woo
Thay hadde I be in ease and not in woo
Only the sighte of hir whom that I serue
Though that I neuer her grace may deserue
Wolde haue sufficed right ynow for me
O dere cosyn Palamon quod he
Thyn is the victory of this auenture
Ful blisful in prison mayst thou endure
In prison nay certis but in paradyse
Wel hath fortune to the turned the dyse
That hath the sighte of hir in myn absence
For possible it is sethnes thou hast hir presence
And art a knyght worthy and able
That by som caas syn fortune is chaungeable
Thou mayst som tyme to thy desire atteyne

But J that am exiled and bareyne
Of alle grace and so in gret despeir
That ther nys Water erthe fyre ne eir
Ne creature that of hem made is
That may me helpe or comfort do J wis
Wel oughte J sterue in wanhope and distres
Far wel my lif my lust and my gladnes
Allas why playnen men so in cõmune
Of purueaunce of god or of fortune
That yeueth hem ofte in meny wyse
Wel better than hem self can deuyse
Som men desire to haue rychesse
That cause is of murdre or gret sikenesse
And som may wolde out of his prison feyn
That in his hous of his meyne is sleyn
Infynyt harmes be in this matere
We woot not what thing we praye here
We farey as he that dronke is as a mous
A dronken man wot wel he hath an hous
But he woot not whiche is the righte wey thider
To a dronkyn man the wey is slider
And certis in this worlde so fare we
We seken faste after felicite
But we go wrong ful ofte sikirly
Thus may we say alle and namely J
That wente haue had a gret oppinion
That and J myghte scape out of prison
Than hadde J be in Joye and in parfyt hele
Ther nolde J any exiled fro myn hele

Sithnes I may not se you Emelye
I ne am but ded ther is no remedye
Upon that other syde Palamon
Whan that he Wiste arcite Was goon
Suche sorow he maketh that the grete tour
Resouned of his yellyngh and his clamour
The pure feteris on his shynys grete
Were of his bittir salt teris Wete
Allas quod he arcite cosyn myn
Of al our strif god Woot the fruyt is thyn
Thou Walkist now in thebes at thy large
And of my Woo you yeuest lityl charge
Thou mayst say thou hast Wisedom & manhede
Assemble alle the folk of our kynrede
And make Warre so sharp on this contre
That by som auenture or by som trete
Thou maist haue hir to lady and to Wyf
For Whom I muste nedis lese my lyf
For as by Wey of possibilite
Sithnes thou art at large and of prison fre
And art a lord greet is thyn auauntage
More than is myn shit ler in a cage
For I may Wepe and Wayle Whylis that I lyue
With al the Woo that prison may me yeue
And eke With peyne that loue me yeyth also
That doubleth al my tourment and my Woo
Therwith the fyre of ielosye up stert
With ynne his brest and hent hym by the hert
So Woodly that he likly Was to beholde

The hop tre or the aſh tre ded or colde
That ſayde ſe o auel goddis that gouerne
The Worlde With bidyng of your Word eterne
And Writen in the tabyl of the athament
Your parlement and your eterñ gaudent
What is mankynde more vnto you holde
Than is the ſheep that wonkith in the folde
For ſlayn is man right as another beeſt
And duellith eke in priſon and in areſt
And hath ſikneſſe and gret aduerſite
And ofte tyme giltlees parde
What gouernaylle is in this preſcience
That giltlees turmentith Jnocence
And yet encreſith this al my penaunce
That man is bounde to his obſeruaunce
For goddis ſake to lettyn of his Wil
There as a beeſt may al his Wil fulfil
And Whan a beeſt is ded he hath no peyne
But aftir his deth man may Wepe & playne
Though in this Worlde he haue care and Wo
Withoute doute it may ſtonde ſo
The anſuer of this lete J to deuynes
But Wel J Woot that in this Worlde gret pyne is
Allas J ſe a ſerpent or a theef
That many a treWe man hath do myſchief
Goon at his large & Where hym liſt may turne
But J muſte be in priſon thourgh ſaturne
And thourgh hym vnhappy and eek Woody
That hath deſtroid Wel nygh al the blood

Of thebes with his Wast Wallis Wyde
And Temus sletth me in that other syde
For Jelosie and feer of hym and arcite
Now Wol I stynte of Palamon alite
And lete hym in his prison stille duelle
And of arcite forth I Wol you telle
The somer passeth the nyghtis Way long
Encreceth he doubil Wyse the peynes strong
Bothe of the louer and of the prisoner
I ne Woot Who hath the Wofuller mysteer
For shortly to say of this Palamon
Perpetuelly is dampned to prison
In cheynys and in feters to be ded
And arcite is exiled on his hed
For euermore and out of that contre
For neuer more shal he his lady se
Now louers aye I now this questyon
Who hath the Worse of arcite e of Palamon
That one may se his lady day be day
But in prison muste he dWelle al Way
That other Where hym list may ryde or goo
But se his lady shal he neuer moo
Now demyth as ye list ye that can
For I Wil telle forth as I began
Whan that arcite to Thebes come Was
Ful ofte a day he swelte and syde allas
For se his lady shal he neuer moo
And shortly to conclude alle his Woo
So moche sorow ne hath creature

That is or ſchal be While the Worldy may dure
His ſleep his mete his drynk is hym beraft
That lene he Way and dry as is a ſchaft
His yen holow and grisly to be holde
His hewe falow and pale as asshy colde
And ſolitary he Was and euer a lone
And Waylinge as he mighte makyng his mone
And yf he herde ſong or inſtrument
Than Wolde he Wepe he might not ſtent
So febyl Were his ſpiritis and ſo lowe
And chaunged ſo that no mā coude hym knowe
His ſpeche ne his Wois though men it herde
As in his gise for al the Worlde it ferde
Nought lik the louers maladye
Of heris but rathir I lik to many
Engendrid of humour malencolyk
Beforn̄ in his celle fantaſtyk
And ſhortly turned Was al vp ſo doun
Bothe habit and diſpoſicion̄
Of hym this Woful louer dan arāte
What ſholde I of his Wo al day endite
Whan he endured hade a yeer or tWo
This cruel turment this peyne and Woo
At Thebes in his contre as I ſayde
Vpon a nyght in ſlepe as he hym layde
Hym thoughte how that the Wynged Meraury
Beforn hym ſtood and bad hym be mery
His ſlepy zerd he bar in hond vp right
An hat he bar vpon his heris bright

Araidy Was this gody as he took kepe
As he Was Whan argus took his slepe
And saide him thus to athenes thou shalt Wende
There is the shape of thy Woo an ende
Andy With that Wordy arate a Wook andy stert
Nolb trelbly holb sore that me smert
Quod he to athenes Wil J fare
Ne for no drede of deth shal J spare
To se my lady that J serue
In her presence recke J not to sterue
Andy With that Wordy he caughte a mryrour
Andy salb that chaungedy Was his colour
Andy salb his bisage al in anothir kynde
Andy right anoy it ray hym in his mynde
That sithnes his face Was disfiguredy
Of maladye the Whiche he hadde enduredy
He myghte Wel if that he Bare hym lolbe
Lyue in athenes euermoze vnknolbe
Andy se his lady Wel nyhe day be day
Andy right anoy he chaungedy his aray
Andy clady hym as a poure laborer
Andy a lone saue only a poure squyer
That knelb his priuite andy his caas
Whiche Was disguysedy pourely as he Was
To athenes is he goy the neyte Way
Andy to the court he Wente vp oy aday
Andy at the gate he profrydy his seruise
To drugy & to draWe & What men Wolde deuyse
Andy shortly of this mater forto seyn

He fil in office toward a chambirleyn
The Whiche that Was dWellyng With Emelye
For he Was Wyse and Wel coude aspye
Of euery seruaunt Whiche that serued there
Wel coude he kelbe Wode and Watir bere
For he Was yong and mighty for the nonys
And therto he Was strong & big of bonys
To do that euy Wight hym coude deuyse
A yeer or tWo he Was in this seruise
Page in the Chambir of Emely the brighte
And Philostrat he sayde that he highte
But half so Wel a louedy man as he
Ne Was ther noN in court of his degre
He Was so gentyl of condicion
That thurgh al the court Was his renoun
They sayde that it Were charite
That Theseus Wolde enhaunse his degre
And put hym in a Worshipful seruise
There that he mighte his Vertu exercise
And thus Withyn a While his name sprong
Both of his dedis and of his tong
That Theseus hath take hym so nere
That of his chambir he made hym a squyere
And yaf hym gold to mayntene his degre
And eke men broughte hym out of his contre
Fro yeer to yeer ful pryuely his rente
But honestly and slighly he it spente
That no man Wondred how that he it hadde
And thre yeer in this Wise his lif he ladde

And haar hym in pees and eke in warre
Ther was noman that Theseus hadde derre
And in this blisse lete I nowe a rate
And speke I wil of Palamon a lite
In derkenesse horrible and in strong prison
This seuen yeer hath sete this Palamon
For pyned what for woo and distresse
Who feleth dowbyl woo and heuynesse
But Palamon that loue distreyueth soo
That wood out of his wit he ny goth for woo
And eke therto he is a prisoner
Perpetuel and not only for a yeer
Who couthe ryme in englisshe properly
His matirdom forsothe it am not I
Therfore I passe as lightly as I may
I wylle not taire yowe alle the day
The thirde nyght as olde bokis sayn
That all this story telleth more and playn
Were it be auenture or destyne
Alas that whan a thing is shapyn it shal be
That sone aftir the mydnyght Palamon
By help of a frend broke hath his prison
And fleeth fro the prison as sone as he may goo
For he hadde yeue his gailer drynke soo
Of clarrey made of a certeyn wyne
With nercotises and Eppe of Thebes fyne
That half ȳ might though men wolde hym shake
The gayler so slepte he mighte not awake
And thus he fleyhe as faste as he may

The nyght was shorte & faste be the day
That nedis cost he moste hym self hyde
And to a groue faste besyde
With dredful herte than stalketh Palamon
For shortly this was his oppinion
That in that groue he wolde hym hyde alday
And in the night than wolde he take his way
To Thebes ward his frendis forto prey
On Theseus to helpe hym werrey
And shortly eyther he wolde lese his liff
Or wynne Emelye to his wiff
This is the effect and the entent playn
Now wil I turne to arcite agayn
That litel wiste how nygh was his care
Til that fortune had brought hym in the snare
The mery larke messanger of may
Salueth in hir song the morow gray
And fyry Phebus riseth so bright
That al the orient laughith of the sight
And with his stremys dryeth the greues
The siluer droppis hangynge on the leuys
And arcite that in the court ryal
With Theseus his squyer principal
Is risyn and loketh on the mery day
And forto do his obseruaunce to may
Remembrynge on the poynt of his desire
He on his courser stirtinge lik the fire
Is riden in to the feldis hym to pleye
Out of the Court were it a myle or tweye

And to the grouе of Whiche that I you tolde
By auenture his Wey he gan to holde
To make hym a garlond of the greuys
Were it of Wodebynde or of hawthorn leuys
And lowde he song ayens the some shene
May al thy flowris and thy grene
Welcome be thou fresh faire May
In hope that I som grene gete may
And fro his courser With a lusty hert
In to the grouе ful lustely he stert
And in a path he romed vp an down
Where as by auenture this Palamon
Was in a bush that noman myghte hym se
Ful sore a ferd of his deth Was he
No thing knew he that this Was arcite
God Woot he Wolde haue trowbed it ful lite
But soth is sayd go sithen is many yeris
That feld hath eyen and Wode hath eris
Hit is ful faire aman to bere hym euyn
For alday men mete at vnset steuyn
For litel Wente arcite of his felawe
That Was so nygh to herkyn of his sawe
Whan that arcite hadde romed al his fyll
Palamon in the bush now sittith stylle
And arcite song al the roundel lustily
In to a study he fyl sodenly
As don thise louers in hir queynte giris
Now in the crop and now in the breris
Now vp now doun as boket in a Welle

Right as the friday sothly forto telle
Nowe it shyneth nowe it rayneth fast
Right so gan guerri venus ouer cast
The hertis of her folk right as her day
His guery thought so chaungeth his aray
Selde is the friday al the woke lik
Whan that arcite hadde songe he be gan to sike
And he set hym doun withoute eny more
Allas quod he the day that I was bore
Nowe longe Juno thurgh thy cruelte
Wilt thow werien thebes the cyte
Alas y brought is to confusion
The blood ryal of Cadyn and amphion
Of Cadimus whiche that was the firste man
That thebes bilt or first the toun began
And of the cyte first was aouned kyngh
Of his lynage am I and of his offspryngh
Be ferray lyne and of stok ryal
And nowe I am so kaytyf and so thral
That he that is my mortal enemy
I serue hym and am his squyer pouerly
And yet doth me Juno welmore shame
For I dar not be knowe myn owen name
But there as I wont was to highte arcite
Nowe highte I philostrat not worth a myte
Allas thou fel mars allas Juno
Thus your ire hath our lynage al fordo
Saue only oon wrecched palamon
That theseus martrith in prison

And ouer all this to sle me bitterly
Loue hath his fyry dart so bremyngly
Ist stikyd thorugh my trew careful hert
That shapen was erst my deth or my shert
Ye sle me with your yen Emelye
Ye be the cause wherfore that I dye
Of al the remenaunt of myn other care
Ne sette I not the mountaunce of a tare
So that I coude do aught to your plesaunce
And with that word he fyl doun in a traunce
A longe tyme and afterward up stert
This Palamon that thoughte thorwh his hert
He felt a cold swerd sodenly glide
For ire he quoke he nolde no lenger abyde
And whan that he hath herd arcites tale
As he were woody with face ded and pale
He stirt hym up out of the bussh thicke
And sayde arcite fals traitour wicke
Now art thou hent that louest my lady so
For whom that I haue this peyne and woo
And art my blood and to my counceyl sworn
And I ful ofte haue told the here beforn
And hast be iapyd here duke Theseus
And falsly hast chaunged thy name thus
I wil be ded or ellis thou shalt dye
Thou shalt not loue my lady Emelye
But I wil loue hir only and no mo
For I am Palamon thy mortal fo
And though I haue no wepyn in this place

But out of prison am stert be grace
That thou sholdist dye of myn hondy
For I defie the seuerte andy the bondy
Whiche that thou saist I haue made to the
What seruey sole thynk that loue is fre
Andy I wil loue hire magre al thy might
But for as muche as thou art a knyght
Andy woldist darrayn here be bataille
Haue here my trouthe to morwe I wil not faile
Without witinge of ony other wight
That here I wil be founden as a knyght
Andy bryngen harneis right ynow for the
Andy chees the beste andy leue the worst for me
Andy mete & drynke this nyght wil I brynge
I now for the & clothis for thy beddynge
Andy yf so be that thou my lady wynne
Andy sle me in this wode that I am Inne
Thou maist wel haue thy lady as for me
This Palamon answerdy I graunte hit the
Andy thus they be departydy tyl amorwe
Whan eyther of hem hath leydy her feith to borwe
Occupiedy out of alle charite
O regne that woldist haue no felow with the
Ful soth is saidy that loue ne lordship
Wil not his thankes haue ony felyship
We fynde thus of arcite andy Palamon
Arcite is ridey anon into the toun
Andy on the morwe anon or it were light
Ful pryuely two harneis hath he dight

Bothe sufficiant and mete to darreygne
The bataylle in the feldy betwix hem tweyne
And oy his hors alone as he was horn
He caryedy the harneis hym beforn
And in the groue at tyme and place set
This arcite and this Palamon been met
To chaunge gan the colour in her face
Right as hunters the in regne of trace
That stondeth at the gappe with a spere
Whan huntyd is the lioun and the bere
And herith hym come russhing in the greuys
And breketh bothe bowes and eke leuys
And thinketh here comyth my mortal enemy
Withoute fayle he muste be ded or I
For eyther I moste sle hym atte gappe
Or he muste sle me yf I mys happe
So ferden they in chaungyng of her hue
As fer as ony of hem other knewe
Ther nas no goody day ne saluynge
But streyght without wordis of rehercyng
Euerich of hem helpith to arme other
As frendly as he were his owen brother
And aftir that with sharpe speris strong
They foynen eche at other longe
Thou myghtist wene that this Palamon
In his fightingy were a lioun
And as a cruel tigre was arcite
As wilde boris gan they to gedir smyte
That freten whit as foom for ire wood

Vp to the ancle foughte they in her blood
And in this wyse I lete hem fightinge duelle
And forsoth I wil of Theseus telle
The destenye mynyster general
That executith in the worlde ouyr al
The purueaunce that god hath beforn
So straunge it is that though ỳ worlde had sworn
The contrary of a thing be ye or nay
Yet somtyme it shal falle vp on aday
That fallith not eft in a thousand yeer
For certenly our appetitys heer
Be it of pees hate warre or loue
Al is reuled be the sighte aboue
This mene I nowe be mighty Theseus
That forto hunte is so desirous
And namely at the grete hert in may
That in his bed ther dawith hym no day
That he nys clad and redy forto ryde
With hunte and horn and houndis be his syde
For in his huntynge hath he suche delite
That it is al his ioye and his appetite
To be hym self the grete hertis bane
For astir Mars he seruyth nowe dyane
Cleer was the day as I haue told or this
And Theseus with al ioye and blis
With his Ipolita the faire quene
And Emely I clothyd al in grene
A huntyng be they riden rially
And to the groue that stood ther fast by

In Whiche ther Was an hert as men hym tolde
Duke Theseus the streight Wey hath holde
And to the launde he ridith ful right
For thider Was the hert Wont to haue his flight
And ouer a brook and so forth on his Way
The duke Wolde haue acours of hym or thei
With houndis suche as he list to comaunde
And Whan this duke Was come to the launde
Vnder the sonne he lokyd and that anon
He Was Waar of arcite and Palamon
That foughten breme as it Were bolis two
The bright swerdis Wente to and fro
So hidously that With the leste strook
He semyd that it Wolde haue fellyd on ook
But What they Were no thing he ne Woot
This duke With his sporis his courser smote
And at a sterte he Was betwix hem two
And pullyd out his sWerde and sayde ho
Nomore on peyne of lesing of your hed
Be myghty marce anon ye shul be ded
That smytith ony strook that I may se
But tellith me What myster men ye be
That be so hardy to fighte here
Withoute Juge or other officere
As though it Were in listis rially
This Palamon answerde hastely
And sayde syre What nedith Wordis moo
We haue the deth deserued bothe tWoo
Two Wofful Wrechis be We and knyghtis

That ben encombred of oure lyues
And as thow art a rightful lord and Juge
Ne yeue vs neyther mercy ne refuge
But sle me first for saint charite
But sle my felow eke as wel as me
Or ellis hym first for thy thou knowe hym lite
He is thy mortal so this is arcite
That fro thy lond was banyssed on his hed
For which he hath deserued to be ded
For this is he that cam to thy yate
And sayde that he highte Philostrate
Thus he hath iaped the many a yeer
And thow hast maad hym thy chief squyer
And this is he that loueth Emely
For sithnes the day is come that I shal dy
I make pleynly my confessiõ
That I am that woful Palamon
That hath thy prison broke wickedly
I am thy mortal so and he am I
That loueth so hote Emely the bright
That I wil dye here present in her sight
Therfore I axe deth of my Jewise
But sle my felow in the same wise
For bothe haue we deserued to be slayn
This worthy duke answerde anoñ agayñ
And saide this is a short conclusiõ
Your owen mouth be your confessiõ
Hath dampned you and I wil it recorde
Hit nedith not to peyne with the corde

Ye ſhul be redy be myghty mars the rede
The quene anon for verray Wommanhede
Gan for to Wepe and ſo dede Emelye
And alle the ladyes in that companye
Gret pyte Was it as hem thoughte alle
That euyr ſuche a chaunce ſholde be falle
For gentilmen they Were and of gret aſtat
And no thing but for loue Was this debaat
And ſalbe hir blody Woundis Wide and ſore
And alle cryden bothe laſſe and more
Haue mercy lordy vpon Vs Wymmen alle
And on her bare knees doun they falle
And Wolde haue kild hem there as they ſtoody
Tyl at the laſte ſlakyd Was his moody
For pyte renneth ſone in gentyl herte
And though he first for ire quoke and ſterte
He conſidered ſhortly in a clauſe
The treſpas of hem bothe and eke the cauſe
And al though that his ire hire gilt acuſed
Yit in his reſon he hem bothe excuſed
And thus he thoughte Wel that euery man
Wil helpe hym ſelf in loue al that he can
And delyuer hym ſelf out of pryſon
And eke in his herte he hadde compaſſion
Of Wommen for they Were euer in one
And in his gentil herte he thoughte anon
And ſofte Vnto hym ſelf he ſayde fy
Vp on a lordy that Wil haue no mercy
But be a lordy bothe in Wordy and dede

To hem that ben in repentaunce and drede
As wel as a proud dispitous man
That wil mayntene that he first began
That lordy hath litil of discrescion
That in suche a cas can no diuision
But weyeth pryde and humbles after one
And shortly whan his ire is thus agon
He gan to loke on hem with yen blake & wglye
And spak thise wordis al on hye
The gody of loue a benedicite
How mighty and how gret alordy is he
Agayns his might ther gayneth non obstakyl
He may be clepidy a gody for his mirakyl
For he can make at his owen gyse
Of euery herte as hym list deuyse
Lo here this arcite and this Palamon
That queyntly cam out of my prison
And mighte a lyuyd in thebes ryally
And knowen I am her mortal enemy
And that here deth lith in me also
And yet hath loue magre hir yen two
Wrought hem hither both forto dye
Now lokith is not this an high folye
Who may be a fole but yf that he loue
Beholdy for goddis sake that sittith aboue
Se how they blede be they not wel arayd
Thus hath her lordy the gody of loue hem payd
Her wages and her fees of her seruyse
And yet they wene forto be wyse

That ſerue loue for aught that may falle
But this is yet the beſte game of alle
That ſhe for Whom they haue this Jolite
Can hem therfore as moche thank as me
She Wot nomore of al this hoot fare
Be god than Woot a Cuckold or any hare
But al muſte be aſſayd hoot or cold
A man muſte be a fool yong or old
I Woot it be my ſelf ful longe agoon
For in my tyme a ſeruaunt Was I one
And therfore ſethnys I knolbe of louys peyne
And Wot holb ſore hit can a man diſtreyne
As he that hath be caught in this laas
I yolb forgeue holly this treſpaas
And at the requeſt of the quene that knelith here
And eke of Emely my ſuſter dere
And ye ſhul bothe vnto me ſWere
That neuer ye ſhal my croune dere
Ne make Warre on me nyght ne day
But be my frendes in al that ye may
I yolb forgeue this treſpas fair and Weel
And they hym ſWar his axing euerideel
And hym of lordſhip and mercy prayde
And he hem grauntyd and thus he ſayde

TO ſpeke of Worthy linage and richeſſe
Though that ſhe Were a quene or a princeſſe
Eche of yolb bothe is Worthy doutles
To Wedde Whan tyme is but natheles
I ſpeke as for my ſuſtir Emely

For whom ye haue this strif and this Jelousy
Ye woot your self ye may not wedde bo
At onys theygh ye fighte euer mo
That one of you al be hym loth or lef
He mot go pype in an Juy lef
This is to say she may not haue bothe
Al be ye neuer so ielous and so lothe
And for thy J you put in this degre
That eche of you shal haue his destene
As hym his shappy and herkyn in what wyse
Lo here youre ende of that J shal deuyse
My wil is this for plat conclusion
Without ony replicacion
Yf that you liketh take it for the beste
That euerich of you shal go where hym liste
Frely without raunson or daunger
And this day fifty wikes fer ne neer
Euerich of you shal bringe an hundred knightis
Armedy for listys by alle rightis
Alredy to darreyne here be batayle
And this behote J yow without fayle
Upon my trowthe & as J am trew knyght
That whether of you both hath that might
May with his hundredy as J spak of now
That is to sey whether he or thow
Sle his contrary or out of listys dryue
Hym shal J yeue Emely to wyue
To whom that fortune yeueth so fair a grace
The listis shal J make on this place

And god so wisly on my sowle rewe
As I shal euene Juge be and trewe
Ye shul non othir ende with me make
That one of you shal be ded or take
And yf ye thinke this is wel said
Saieth your auys and holde you payd
This is your ende and your conclusion
Who lokith nowe lighty but Palamon
Who spryngeth vp for ioye but arcite
Who cowde telle or Who coude endite
The ioye that made is in this place
Whan Theseus hadde do so fair a grace
But doun a knees wente euery wight
And thanked hym with al her myght
And namely the Thebans ofte sithe
And thus with good hope and herte blithe
They take her leue and homward they ryde
To Thebes with olde walles wyde
I trowe men wolde it deme negligent
Yf I forzete to telle the entent
Of Theseus that goth so besily
To make vp the listis ryally
That suche an nobyl entre as it was
I dar wel say in this worlde ther nas
The cuntre a myle ther of was aboute
Walled with stoon and diched rounde aboute
Rounde was the shappe in maner of a compas
Ful of degrees the highest of sixty paas
That whan a man was set in on degre

He letteth not his feloŵ forto se
Estwardy ther was a gate of marbil whit
Westwardy suche another appositit
Andy shortly to conclude suche a place
Was noŋ im erthe im so litil space
For im the londy ther was no craftis man
That gemetrie or ars metric can
Ne portreture ne keruar of Jmages
That Theseus ne yaf mete drynke & wages
The entre forto make andy deuyse
Andy forto do his ryte andy his sacrifice
He Estwardy hath vp oy the gate aboue
In worship of venus goddesse of loue
So make an auter andy ay Oratory
Andy oy the westwardy im memory
Of marce hath he maady suche another
That coste large of goldy a fother
Andy northwardy im a tour of the wal
Of whit alabastre andy reedy coral
An Oratory riche forto see
In worship of dyane goddesse of chastite
Hath Theseus do wrought im nobil wise
But yet hadde J forgete to deuyse
The nobilk keruynge andy the portreturis
The shap the countenaunce & the figuris
That weren im the Oratorues thre
First im the tempil of venus thou maist se
Wrought im the wal ful petously to be holde
The brokyn slepis andy the sighis colde

The sakryd terys and the Weymentynge
The firy strokys and the desirynge
That loues folkes in this Worlde enduryn
The othes be her couenauntis assuren
Plesaunce hope desire and fool hardinesse
Beaute and yongthe baudry and richesse
Charmys and sorcerye lesinges and flaterye
Dispence besinesse and Jelousye
That Wered of yelow gold a garlond
And a Cuckow sittyng on her hond
Feestis instrumentis carollis and daunsis
Lust and aray and alle the circumstaunces
Of loue Whiche that I rekene and shal
Be ordir Were peynted on the Walle
And mo than I can make mencion
For sothly al the mounte of citheron
There venus hath hir principal dwellyng
Was shewd on the Wal here portreyyng
With al the ioye and al the lustinesse
Nought Was foryeten the Porters idelnesse
Ne Narcysus the faire yore agoon
Ne yet the folye of kyng Salamon
The enchauntement of Medea and hardynesse
Of Jason I Wil not now expresse
Ne of turnus With his hardy fyre corage
The riche Cresus caytifs in seruage
Thus may ye se that Wisedom ne riches
Beaute sleyghte strengthe ne hardinesse
Ne may With venus holde champartye

For as she list the Worlde may she gye
So alle thyse folk caught Were in her lase
Tyl they for Wo ful ofte sayde allas
Suffiseth thyse ensamplis one or tWo
And thoWgh I coude rekene a thousandy mo
The statu of Venus glorious for to se
Was maady fletynge in the large se
And fro the nauyl douyn she Was
With Wallis bright as ony glas
A cotel in hir right hondy hadde she
And on her hedy ful semely on to se
A rose garlondy fressh & Wel smellyng
A boue her heedy douues also fleyng
Beforn hir stoody her sone cupido
Upon his shuldris Wyngis hadde he tWo
And blyndy he Was as it is ofte seen
A bolde he baar and arowes cleen
Why sholde I not eke telle of the Walle
The portreyynge that Was on hit alle
With in the tempyl of mighty mars the rede
Al Was peyntedy the Wallis in lengthe & brede
Lyke to the Estris of the gryssly place
That hight the grete tempyl of mars in trace
In that coldy northery frosty regioun
There as mars hath his souereyn mansion
First on the Wal Was peyntydy a forest
In Whiche ther dWellith neyther man ne best
With knotty & knarry barreyn treys olde
Of stubbis sharp & hidous to beholde

In Whiche ray as a Wymbyl in a ſWolbe
As though it a ſtormy Were ſholde breſt euery bolb
Andy dolbnWardy oy ay hil Vnder abent
There ſtoody the tempyl of marte armyppotent
Wrought al of burnydy ſteel the Whiche the entre
Was longe andy ſtreight andy gladly forto ſe
Andy ther out cam a rage andy ſuche a reyſe
That it made al the gatis forto reyſe
The northeren light in at the dore ſhon
For Wyndolb oy the Wal Was ther noy
Thurgh Whiche men myghte ony light diſſerne
The doris Were al of athemaundis eterne
I clenchidy ouerthWart andy endlonge
With Irey forto make it ſtrongy
Euery pyler the tempyl forto ſuſteyne
Was tomme greet of yrey bright andy ſhene
There ſalb I firſt the derk ymagenyngy
Of felony andy al the compaſſingy
The auel ire reedy as ony glede
The pyke purs andy eke the pale rede
The ſmyler With the knyf Vnder the cloke
The ſhepey brennyngy With the blak ſmoke
The treſon of the murdryngy in the bedy
The opyn Werris With Woundis alle bledy
Contak With blody knyf andy ſharp manace
Al ful of chirkyngy Was the ſory place
The ſleer of hym yet ſalb I there
His herte bloody hath batedy al his chere
The nayl I dryue in the ſhode ay highte

The wolde deth With mouth gappynge vp right
A mydoyl of the tempil sat myschaunce
With discomfort and sory contenaunce
Yet sawJ Woodnesse lawghynge in his rage
The hunter strangledy With the Wilde boris corage
The sowe fretynge the childy in the cradil
The wokJ scaldedy for his longe ladil
Nought forzetyn Was the infortune of Mars
The carter ouer ridey With his owey hors
Vnder the Wheel ful lowe he lay adoun
There Were also of martirs destruccioun
The barbour the boteler andy the smyth
That forgedy sharpe swerdis in the stith
And al aboue depeyntedy in a tour
The high conquest sittynge in gret honour
With the sharp swerdy ouer his hedy
Hangynge be a subtil twynedy thredy
Depeyntedy Was there the slaughtir of Julius
O grete Nero andy of antonius
Al be that tyme they Were vnborn
Yet Was her deth peyntedy there beforn
Be manassynge of Marce right be figure
So Was it shewdy right be portreture
As it is depayntedy in the serclis aboue
Who shal be sleyn or dedy for loue
Suffiseth on ensampyl in storyes olde
I may not rekene alle thoughJ Wolde
The statu of Marce vp oy a carte stoody
Armydy andy lokydy grym as he Were Woody

And ouer his hed ther shynen two figurys
Lyke vnto the figure of virgynys
That one puella hight that othir Julius
This god of armys was arayd thus
A Wolf ther stood before hym at his feet
With yen rede and of aman he eet
With subtile pensel was peyntyd this story
In redowndynge of Marce and of his glory
Now to the tempyl of dyane the chaste
As shortly as I can I wyl me haste
To telle yow al the descripcion
Depeyntyd on the Wallis vp and down
Of huntynge and of shamefast chastite
There saw I how Wofull Calistope
When that dyane greuyd was With here
Was turned fro Womman in to a here
And after was she maad the lood sterre
Thus was it peynted I can say no ferre
Her sone is eke a sterre as men may se
There saw I dyane turned vntil a tre
I mene not the goddesse dyane
But Peneus doughter Whiche that highte dyane
There saw I atheon an hert I makyd
For vengeaunce that he saw dyane al nakyd
I saw how that houndis haue hym caught
And fretyn hym for that they knew hym nought
Yet I peynted was a lityl furthermoze
How athalante huntyd the Wylde boze
And meliager and meny other moo

For whiche Diane wroughte hym care & wo
There sawȝ many another wonder story
The whiche me list not drawe in memory
This goddesse on an hert high is sete
With smale houndis aboute her fete
And vndernethe hir feet she hadde a mone
Wexynge it was and sholde wane sone
In gaudy grene her statu clothed was
With bowe in hond and arwes in caas
Here yen cast she ful lowe a doun
There pluto hath his derk regioun
A womman trauelynge was here beforn
But for hir childe so longe was vnborn
Ful pitously Lucyna gan she calle
And sayde help for thou maist best of alle
Wel coude he peynte liuely that it wroughte
With meny a floreyn he thyse huwis boughte
Now ley thise listis maad & Theseus
That at his grete cost hath arayd thus
The temples and the auters ouerydel
Whan it was don̄ it likyd hym wel
But stynte I wil of Theseus alite
And speke of Palamon and of arcite
The day approchith in here attourneyynge
That euerich sholde an hundrid knyghtes brynge
The bataylle to darreyne as I you tolde
And til Theseus here couenaunt forto holde
Hath euerich of hem brought an hundrid knightes
Wel armed for the werre at al rightes

And̄ ſikirly ther trowed̄ many aman
That neuyr ſithnes the Worlde began
As forto ſpeke of knyghthood̄ of her hond̄
As fer as god̄ hath made ſee and lond̄
Nas of ſo felde ſo nobyl accompany
For euery Wight that loued̄ chyualrye
And̄ Wolde his thankys haue paſſinḡ name
He prayde that he myghte be of that game
And̄ Wel Was hym that therto choſyn Was
For yf ther fyl to morow ſuche a caas
Ye knowe Wel that euery luſty knyght
That loueth paramouris and̄ hath his might
Were it in engelond̄ or ellis Where
They Wolde her thankys Willen to be there
To fight for a lady a benedicite
Hit Were a luſty ſighte forto ſe
And̄ right ſo ferthe they With Palamon
With hym ther Wente knyghtis many oon
Some Wolde be armed̄ in habergeon
Some in breſt plate and̄ in bright gippon
And̄ ſome Wol haue a peir of platis large
And̄ ſome Wolde haue ſpruſe ſheldis & targe
Some Wolde be armed̄ on his leggis Wele
And̄ haue an ax and̄ a mace of ſteel
Ther is no newe guyſe but it Was old̄
Armed̄ Were they as I haue told̄
Eueriche after his owen opinion
There maiſt thow ſe comynḡ With Palamon
Ligurge hym ſelf the kynḡ of trace

Blak was his berd & manly was his face
The cercles of his yen in hes heed
They glowden betwix yelow and reed
And lyke a griffyn loked he aboute
With kempt heris in his browis stoute
His lymes grete his brawn hard & strong
His shuldres brode his armes round & long
And as the gyse was in his contre
Ful high vp on a chare of gold stood he
With four white bolis in the trace
In stede of Cote armure in his harnase
With naylis yelow & bright as ony golde
He hadde a tere skyn wol blak for olde
His longe heris were kempt behynd his bak
As ony rauen fethir it shon for blak
A wrethe of gold arme grete of huge weyghte
Vp on his hed sat. With many a stone bright
Of fyn Rubyes and of fyn diamantes
Aboute his chare ther wante alauntes
Twenty and mo as grete as ony steer
To honte atte liown or ellis at the deer
And folowed hym with mosel faste I bounde
Colers of gold and torettis filyd round
Ay hundrid lordis he hadde in his rowte
Armed weel as knyghtis sterne & stoute
With arcite as men in story fynde
The stronge Emetrius the kyng of Inde
Vp on a bay stede I trappid al in steel
Armed with a cloth of gold I diapred weel

Cam ridynge the gody of armys Marce
His cote armur was of cloth of tarce
Colwchidy with perlis white wunde andy grete
His sadyl was of brent goldy nelwe y lete
A mantelet oy his shuldris hangynge
Bret ful of rubyys bright as fyre spryngynge
His brighte ayspe heris lyke ryngys were wome
Andy that was yelolw & glitteredy as the sonne
His nose was higth his yey bright andy grym
His lippis wunde his colour sanguyn
A felwe frakelis im his face were spreynt
Betwix yelolw andy somdeel blak meynt
Andy as aliouy he lokydy aboute faste
Of .xvb. yeer of age I hym caste
His berdy was wel begonne forto sprynge
His throte was as a trompe solwnynge
Up oy his hedy he werydy of laurer grene
A garlondy fressh andy lusty forto sene
Upon his hedy he baar for his dedlwyte
Ay egle as ony lily whit
Ay hundredy knyghtes hade he with hym there
Al armedy sane her hedis andy al her gere
Were richely arayedy im alle maner thingis
Trustith wel that erlis dukes andy kyngis
Were gadredy im this nobyl companye
For loue andy encrece of cheualrye
Aboute this kyngy ther wemen oy euery part
Wel many tame lionis andy libart
Andy im this wyse the lordis alle andy sony

Been on the sunday to the cyte comy
Aboute prime & in the towy a light
This Theseus this duke this Worthy knyght
When he hadde brought hem in to the cyte
Andy ymedy hem euerich at his degre
He festith hem andy doth hem gret labour
To ese hem andy to do hem al honour
That may ne Woman ne no maner Wight
Of none astat so coude amende it
The mynstralcye the seruise at the feste
The grete giftis to the most andy lest
The riche aray of Theseus Paleys
Ne Who sat first ne last vp on the deys
Or What feirest or best daunsynge
Or Whiche of theym can best daunce or synge
Ne Who most felingly speketh of loue
What halkys sitte on the perchis aboue
What houndis lyen in the flour adown
Of alle this make I no mencion
But of the effect that thynketh me best
Now comyth to the poynt herken yf ye list

The sonday at night or day began to springe
When Palamon herde the larke synge
Al that it Were not day be houris two
Vnto the temple purposeth he to go
With hool herte andy With al high corage
Is risen to Wende on his pilgremage
To the blisful Citherea benigne
I mene Venus honourable andy digne

And in her houre she walked forth a pace
Unto the listis there the temple was
And down she knelith and with humble chere
And with herte sore she sayde as ye shul here
Feyrest of feyre o lady myn Venus
Doughter to Jouis and spouse to Vlcanus
That gladdest al the mounte of sithcon
For that loue that thou haddest to adoun
Haue pyte on my bitter teris smert
And take myn humble prayer at thy hert
Allas I haue no lengthe forto telle
The effect ne the turment of myn helle
Myn herte may not myn harmys bewreye
I am so sorowful that I can not seye
But lady bright that knowest wel
My thought and seest the harmys that I fele
Considere this and rewe vp on my sore
As wisly as I shal for euermore
Enforce my myght thy trewe seruaunt to be
And holde werre lady with chastite
That I make myn auowe so ye me helpe
I kepe not of armys forto yelpe
Ne I aye to mowe forto haue victory
Ne renoun in this caas ne veynglorye
Of pryse of armys to blowe vp and down
But I wolde fully haue possession
Of Emely and dye in thy seruise
Fynd thou the maniere how and what wyse
I recche not but yf it may better be

To haue victory of them or they of me
So that I haue my lady in myn armys
For though so be ỹ mars be greete god of armys
Your vertu is so greet in heuene aboue
That yf yow list I shal haue my loue
Thy tempyl wol I worshipe euermo
And on an auter where I ryde or go
I wil do sacrifice and fire bete
And yf ye wil not so my lady swete
Than praye I the to morow with a spere
That arcite me thorow the herte bere
Than recke I nat whan I haue lost my lif
Though that arcite wynne here to his wyf
This is the effect and the ende of my prayer
Yeue me my lif my blissed lady dere
Whan that the orison was don of palamon
His sacrifice he did and that anon
Ful petously with alle circumstaunces
Alle telle I not as now his obseruaunces
And al the statu of venus sholte
And made a signe wherby he took
That his prayer acceptid was that day
For though the figure shewde delay
Yet wiste he wel that grauntyd was his bone
And with glady herte he wente hym hom sone
The thirde hour equal that palamon
Began to venus tempil forto gon
Ap was the some & vp was Emely
And to the tempil of diane gan hye

Her maidens that With hir thider Were lady
Ful redely With hem fair clothis they hady
Theseus clothis andy the remnaunt al
That to the sacrifise longyn shal
The hornes ful of methe as Was the gyse
There lackyd nought to doy hir sacrifise
Smokyngy the tempyl ful of clothis fein
This Emely With hert deboneir
Her body With Water in a Welle
But holy she didy there I dar not telle
But hit be ony thingy in general
Andy yet it Were a game to here it al
To hym that meneth Wel it Were no charge
But it is goody amay to be at his large
Her bright heer Was kempt andy Untressedy al
Andy a crolone of greene oke sercial
Vp oy her hedy set ful fair andy mete
Two firis oy the anter gay she bete
Andy dyde here thynges as men may be holde
In state of Thebes andy in bokis olde
Whey kyndeledy Was the fyre With pitous chere
Vnto dyane she spak as ye may here
O chast goddesse of the Wode greene
To Whom bothe heuene andy erthe & see is sene
Quene of the regne of pluto derk andy lolde
Goddesse of maydens that my hert hast knolde
Ful many a yeer andy Wotist What I desire
As keep me fro the vengeaunce of thy fyre
That atheny aboughte trelly

Chaſt goddeſſe Wel Wotiſt thou that J
Deſire to be amaiden al my lyf
Ne neuer Wol J be loue ne Wyf
J am thou Wotiſt yet of thy company
Amaiden andy loue huntyngy andy venory
Andy forto Walkyn in the Wodis Wilde
Andy not to be a Wyf andy be With childe
Nought Wil J knowe no companye of may
Now helpe me lady ſithnes thou may andy can
For the three fourmes that thou haſt in the
Andy Palamon that hath ſuche loue to me
Andy eke arcite that loueth me ſo ſore
This grace J pray the Withouten more
As ſende loue andy pees betwix hem two
Andy fro me turne awey hert hertis ſo
That al hir hote loue andy her deſire
Andy al her beſy turment andy al hir fire
Be queynt or turnedy in another place
Andy if ſo be thou Wilt do me no grace
Or yf my deſtenye be ſhapen ſo
That J ſhal nedis haue on of hem two
As ſendy me hym that moſt deſireth me
Behold goddeſſe my clene chaſtite
The bittir teris that on my chekis falle
Sithnes thou art a maide & keper of vs alle
My maidenhedy thou kepe & Wel conſerue
Andy Whiles J lyue a maidy Wil J the ſerue
Thiſe firis breme vp on the auters cleer
While Emely Was thus in hir praiere

But sodenly she saw a sighte queynt
For right anon on of the fyris queynt
And quyckyd agayn and aftir that anon
That oyer fyre was queynt and al agon
And as it queynt it made a whisshing
As doth thyse wete brondis in her bremyng
And at the brondis ende out ran anon
As it were dropis blody many on
For whiche so sore agast was Emely
That she was almost mad and gan to cry
For she ne wiste what it signifyed
But only for feer thus hath she cryed
And wepte that it was pyte to here
And therwith al dyane gan appere
With bowe in hond right as an hunteres
And sayde doughter stynt thyn heuynesse
Among the goddis an hyghe it is affermed
And by eterne worde writen and confermed
Thou shalt be wedded vntil one of two
That haue for the so moche care and woo
But vnto whiche of hem may I not telle
Fare wel for I may no lenger dwelle
The fyris whiche on myn auter breme
Shul the declarer or thou go heme
Thyn auenture of loue as in this caas
And with that word the arowes in the caas
Of the goddesse clateren faste and rynge
And forth she went & made a vanysshinge
For whiche this Emely astonyed was

And ſayde What amounteth this caſe
I put me vnder thy protection
Dyane and thy diſpoſicion
And how ſhe goth anon the nexte Wey
This is the effect ther is nomore to ſey
And in the houre of Mars after this
A Rate vnto the tempil Walkyd is
Of fyres of marte to do his ſacrifiſe
With alle the rightis of his paynem Wyſe
With pyetous herte and high deuocion
Right thus to marte he ſayde this oriſon
O ſtrong god that in the regnes colde
Of trace honoured art and lord I holde
And haſt in euery regne and euery lond
Of armys al the bridil in thy hond
And hem fortuneſt as the liſt beſt deuyſe
Accepte of me my pyetous ſacrifiſe
Yf ſo be that my thought may deſerue
And that my myght be Worthy to ſerue
Thy godhede that I may be oon of thyn
Than prey I the telle oon my pyn
For that peyne and that hote fire
The Whiche that Whilom brendiſt for deſire
Whan that thou vſediſt the beaute
Of feyre yong freſſh Venus fre
And had of hir in thy armys thy Wille
And though the onys a tyme mys fille
Whan Vlcanus had caught the in his laas
And fond the liggynge be his Wif alas

For that ſorwe that was in thy hert
Haue wlbthe as wel vp on my peynys ſmert
I am yongh and vnkomynge as thou woſt
And as I trolbe with loue offendid moſt
Than euer was ony liuys creature
For ſhe that doth me al this wo endure
Ne reckith neuer whether I ſynke or flete
And wel I woot or ſhe me mercy hete
I muſte with ſtrengthe wynne here in place
And wel I wot without help and grace
Of the may I not my ſtrengthe avayle
Than help me lozdy to mozolb in my batayle
For that fyre that whilom brent the
As wel as that fyre nolb brennyth me
And do that I to mozolb haue victory
Myn be the trauayl and thyn be the glory
Thy ſouereyn tempyl wil I moſt honouren
Of ony place alwey and moſt labolbryn
In thy pleſaunce and in thy craftis ſtronge
And in thy tempyl I wil my baner honge
And alle the armys of my companye
And euermoze vntyl that I dye
Eterne fyre I wol beforn the fynde
And elle to this avolbe I wil me bynde
My lerdy my lyer that hangith longh adown
That neuer yet felt offenſioun
Of raſour ne of ſheere I wil the yeue
And be thy trelbe ſeruaunt whilis I lyue
Nolb lozdy haue wlbthe vp on my ſorwlbis ſore

Yeue me the victory I aye nomore
The prayer stynt & arcite the strongh
The ringis that on the tempil dore hongh
And eke the dores clatered so faste
Of whiche arcite somwhat hym agaste
The firis brende vp on the auters bright
That it gan al the tempil forto light
A sote smel anon the ground vp yaf
And arcita anon his hond vp gaf
And more encence in to the fire caste
With other rightis and at the laste
The statu of marce began his hanberk ringe
And with that sodeyn he herde a morninge
Ful lowe and dym and sayde victory
For whiche he yaf to marce honour and glory
And thus with ioye and hope wel to fare
Arcite anon to his Inne is fare
As fayn as fowle is of the bright sonne
And right anon such strif is there begonne
For that grauntynge in heuene aboue
Betwix venus goddesse of loue
And marce the sterne god armypotent
That Iubiter was fayn it to stynte
Tyl that the pale Saturnus the colde
That knew so many of auenturis olde
Fond in his experience and art
That he ful sone hath plesed euery part
As soth is said, eld hath gret auauntage
In eld is bothe wisedom and vsage

Men may the olde out renne but not out rede
Saturn anon to stynte strif and drede
Al be it that it is ayens his kynde
Of al this strif he can remedies fynde
My dere doughter dere quod Saturne
My cours that hath so wyde forto turne
Hath more power than hath ony man
Myn is the drenchynge in the see so wan
Myn is the pryson in the derk cote
Myn is the strangelingh & hangyngh be the throte
The murmur and the chorlis rebellynge
The groynynge and the pryue enpoysonynge
I do vengeaunce and pleyn correction
Whiles I dwelle in the signe of the lion
Myn is the ruyne of the high halles
The fallynghe of the touris and of the walles
Vp on the mynour and vp on the Carpenter
I slough Sampson shakynge the pyler
And myne ben the maladyes colde
The grete treson and the castis olde
My lokynge is the fader of pestelence
Nolde wepe nomore I shal do my diligence
That Palamon that is thyn owen knyght
Shal haue his lady as thou hym behight
And marce shal kepe his knight yet natheles
Betwix you ther muste be somtyme pees
Al be ye not of on complexion
That causith alday suche diuision
I am thyn al redy at thy wille

Wepe nolb nomore J Wil thy luſt fulfille
Nolb Wol J ſtynte of the goddes aboue
Of marce andy venus goddes of loue
Andy telle you al pleynly as J can
The greete effect of Whiche J began
GReet Was the feſte in attenes that day
Andy eke the luſty ſeſon of may
Made euery Wight to be in ſuche pleſaunce
That al that moneth Juſte they & daunce
Andy ſpendey it in venus high ſeruiſe
But be cauſe that they ſholdey ariſe
Erly forto ſe the greete ſight
Vnto her reſte Wente they at nyght
Andy on the morolb Whey day gan ſprynge
Of hors andy noyſe harneis andy claterynge
Ther Was in hoſtelries al aboute
Andy to the paleys ther ridith many aroute
Andy lordis vp on ſtedis andy palfreys
There maiſt thou ſe deuyſinge of harneys
So bnolbthe andy ſo riche andy Wel
Of goldſmythrye of browderye & that ſubtel
The ſheldis bright teſteris andy trappours
Goldy helwedy helmes haubergeis & cote armours
Raymyd the ſperis andy helmes bokelyng
Guydyng of ſheldis With leyners laſynge
There as nede is they Were no thing Idyl
The fomy ſtedes on the goldyn bridyl
Albey gnalbynge andy faſte the armerers alſo
With file andy hamer prikyng to andy fro

Yemen on ſote and̄ knaues many on
With ſhorte ſtaues thicke as they may gon
Pipis trompis naconers and̄ clarions
That in the bataylle blew blody ſownis
The paleys ful of peppl vp an doun
Here thre here.ten holdyngh her queſtion
Demynge of the thebay knyghtis two
Sum ſayde thus ſome ſayde it ſhal be ſo
Some held̄ with hym with the blak berd̄
Som̄ with the ballyd̄.ſome with ỹ thicke herid̄
Some ſayde he loked̄ grym and̄ he wolde fighte
He hath a ſparth of.xx.pounde of wighte
Thus was the halle ful of demenynge
Longe aftir that the ſomme gan to ſpryngh
The grete Theſeus that of his ſleep is wakyd̄
With mynſtralſie & noyſe that was maked̄
Held̄ yet the chambir of his paleys riche
Tyl that the thebay knyghtis bothe y liche
Honoured̄ were and̄ in to the Paleys fet
Duke Theſeus is at the wyndow ſet
Arayd̄ as he were god̄ in trone
The peppl preced̄ thiderward̄ ful ſone
Hym forto ſeen and̄ his high reuerence
And̄ eke to harkyn his beſt and̄ his ſentence
Ay hewolde on a ſhaffold̄ made an O
Tyl that the noyſe of the peppl was do
And̄ whan he ſaw the peppl of noyſe al ſtille
Thus ſhewde he the mighty dukes Wille
The lord̄ hath of high diſcreſſion

Considered that it were destruction
To gentil blood to fighten in this wyse
Of mortal bataille nold in this empryse
Wherfore to scape that they sholde not dye
He wil his firste purpos modifye
Noman therfore on peyne of losyng his lif
No maner shot. ne pollax. ne short knyf
Unto the listis bryngе. ne thider sende
Ne short swerdis forto stykе bytende
Ne noman to dralbe ne bere be his syde
Ne noman shal to his felalb ryde
Foynyng if hym list on fote hym self to wreke
Ne noman so hardy this ordenaunce forto breke
And he that is at myschief shal be take
And not slayn. but brought to the stake
That shal be ordeyned on eyther syde
But thider he shal be force and there abyde
And if so falle the cheftein be take
On either syde or ellis sleth his make
No lenger shal the turneyyng laste
God spede you goth on and leith on faste
With longe swerdis & maces fight your fil
Goth nold your wey this is the lordis wil
The lois of the peppl tolbchidy heuene
So lolde cryde they with mylde steuen
God saue suche a lordy that is so goody
He willith no destruction of blody
Up goth the trumpis and the melodye
And to the listis ridith this companye

Be ordenaunce thourgh out the cyte large
Hangynge with cloth of gold & not with sarge
Ful like a lordy this nobyl duke gan ryde
Thyse two tha bans on eyther syde
Andy aftir wody the quene andy Emely
Andy aftir hem of ladyes another company
Andy aftir hem comunes eche aftir his degre
Andy thus they passe thurgh the cyte
Andy to the listis come they betyme
Hit is not of the day yet fully pryme
Whan set Theseus was riche on higth
Ipolita the quene andy Emelie
Andy other ladies in degrees abowte
Unto the setes passeth al the rowte
Andy afterwardy thurgh the yates of Marte
Arcite andy eke the hundredy of his parte
With baner reedy is entredy right anoy
Andy in that selue moment Palamon
Is vnder Venus estwardy in that place
With baner andy hardy chere of face
In al the worlde to seke vp andy doun
So euene without variacioun
Ther were suche companyes tweye
For ther was noy so wyse that coude seye
That ony hadde of other auauntage
Of worthinesse ne estate ne of age
So euen were they chosen forto gesse
Andy in two raungis faire they hem dresse
Andy whan that her names redy were ecrichon

That in her noumbre gile was ther noon
Tho were the yatis shyt and cride was loude
Doth nolle your deuer yong knyghtis proude
The herolldes lefte hir prikyng vp and doun
Nolle rungyn trompis lolde and clarioun
Ther is nomore to sey but est and west
In goth the speris ful sadly in the rest
Ther shyueryn shaftis vp on sheldis thikke
He felith thorolle the hert spon the prik
Vp springith speris twenty foot on highte
Out goth the swerdis as the siluer brighte
The helmes therto helpen and to shrede
Out brestith the blood with stoute stremys rede
With mighty maces the bonys they to brest
And thorolle the thickest they throng & threst
There stombelyn stedis strong & doun falle
He rollith vnder foot as doth a balle
He soyneth on his foot with his trunchon
And he hurte lith with his hors adoun
He thorolle the body is hurt and sithnes take
Magre his heed and brought to the stake
As forward was right there he moste abide
Anothir ledy is on that other side
And somtyme doth hem Theseus to reste
Hem forto refresshe and drynke yf theym liste
Ful ofte aday haue the thebans two
To geder y met and wrought eyther wo
Vnhorsid hath eche other of hem tweye
Ther is no tiger in the vale of galeseye

Whey that her Whelpe is ſtole Whey it is lite
So cruel on the hunte as is arcite
For ielous herte vp on this Palamon
Ne in belmarie ther is non ſo fel altoun
That huntidy is or for angir Woody
Ne of his pray deſirith ſo the bloody
As Palamon to ſle his foo arcite
The ielous ſtrokis on her helmys bite
Out remeth bloody on bothe her ſides reedy
Som tyme an ende ther is of euery dede
For or the ſonne out of the Weſt Went
The ſtronge kyng Emetrus gan hent
This Palamon as he fought With arcite
And made his ſWeerdy depe in his fleſh bite
And by the force of tWenty Was he take
And yolden and drawe to the ſtake
And in the reſcous of this Palamon
The ſtronge kyng Ligurge is bozn adoun
And kyng Emetrus for al his ſtrengthe
Is bozn out of his ſadil a ſWerdis lengthe
So hitte hym Palamon or he Were ytake
But al for nought he Was brought to the ſtake
His hardy herte myghte hym helpe nought
He muſte abyde Whey he Was caught
Be force and eke be compoſicion
Who ſorWeth noW but this Palamon
That muſte nomore go ayen to fight
And Whan that Theſeus hadde ſeye that ſight
He cryde than ho. nomore for it is done

Ne noȝ ſchal lenger vnto his felaw gone
I wil be twelue Juge andȝ not partyȝ
Arcite of thebes ſchal haue Emelyȝ
That by his fortune hath her feir Jwomme
Anoȝ ther is anoyſe of pepil begomme
For ioye of this ſo loude andȝ higȝ with al
That it ſemedȝ that ye liſtys ſchold fal
What can nolw faire venus done aboue
What ſaith ſhe what doth the quene of loue
But wepith ſo for wantyngȝ of hir wil
Til that her teris in the liſtys fil
She ſayde Jam a ſchamedȝ doutlees
Saturne ſayde doughter holdȝ thy pees
Marce hath his wil the knyght hath his bone
Andȝ by my hoodȝ thou ſchalt be eſedȝ ſone
The trompettis with the lowdȝ mynſtralſie
The herowdes that ful lowde houle andȝ crye
Gene in her ioye for the weel of dane arcite
But herkeneth me andȝ ſtyntith alite
Whiche a mirakil ther be fil anone
This fierce arcite hath his helm of done
Andȝ on a courſer forto ſchewe his face
He prykedȝ endlongȝ the large place
Lokyngȝ vpwardȝ vp on this Emelye
Andȝ ſhe agayn hym caſt a frendly ye
For wommen forto ſpeke of comune
They folow alle the fauour of fortune
Andȝ was al in his chere as in his hert
Out of the groundȝ a fire infernal ſtert

From pluto sent atte requeste of saturne
For Whiche his hors for feer gan to turne
And lepte a syde and foundrydy as he lepe
And or that arcite may take kepe
He pighte hym on the pomel of his hedy
That in the place he lay as he were dedy
His brest to brosten with his sadyl bolwe
As blak he lay as ony cole or crowe
So was the bloody comme in his face
Anon he was borȝ̄ out of the place
With herte sore to Theseus paleys
Tho was he corvyn out of his harneis
And in a bedy brought ful feyre and bliue
For he was yet in memory and alyue
And alwey crying after Emelye
Duke Theseus with al his companye
Is come hom to athenes his cyte
With al blis and gret solempnite
Al be it that this auenture was falle
He nolde not discomforte hem alle
Mey sayde eke that arcite sholde not dye
He sholde be heldy of his maladye
And of another thing they were feyn
That of hem alle ther was non sleyn
Alle were they sore hurt and namely one
That with a spere was thrilled the brestbone
The othir woundis and the broke bones
Some hadde saluys made for the nones
Fermacies of herbes and eke sane

They dronkyn for they Wolde her lyues hane
For Whiche this nobil duke as he Wel can
Comforteth and honoureth euery man
And made reuell al the longe nyght
Unto the straunge lordis as it Was right
Ne there Was holden no discomfytynge
But as a Justes or a turmentynge
For sothly ther Was no descomfiture
For faylyng nys but auenture
Ne to be lady be force Unto the stake
Ny yeldyn and With twenty knyghtis take
Ny pfone allone With oute mo
And hariedy forth be arme foot and to
And eke his stede dryuen forth With stauys
With footmen bothe yemen and knauys
Hit Was a reknedy hym no relonye
Ther may noman clepe it a cowardrye
For Whiche anon duke Theseus let crye
To stynty al rancour and enuye
The degre as Wel in o side as in other
And eythir side lyk as othir brothir
And yaf hem giftis after her degre
And fully held a feste dayes thre
And conueyed the knyghtis Worthily
Out of his tolwn a iourney largely
And hom Wente euery man the righte Way
Ther Was no more but farWel haue goody day
Yt forto speke of Palamon e arcite
Of Palamon Wil I stynte alite

But ſwellith the breſt of arcite and the ſore
Encreſith at his hert more and more
The cloteryd blody for ony lechecraft
Corruptith and in his bowk is laft
That neyther kyne blody ne kentoſynge
Ne drynke of herbis may be his helpynge
The vertu expulſif or anymalt
Fro that vertu I clepyd naturalt
Ne may the venym lowde ne expelle
The pipis and his lungis gan to ſwelle
And euer lacert in his breſt adoun
He is ſchent with venyme and corrupcion
Hym gayneth nothing for to gete his lyf
He lowdeth vpward and doumward laxatif
Al is to broſten that regioun
Nature hath in hym no dominacion
And certeynly ther nature wol not wirche
Fare wel phiſik go here the may to chirche
This is al and ſom arcite muſte dye
For whiche he ſendith after Emelye
And Palamon that was his coſyn dere
Than ſayde he thus as ye ſchul after here
Now may the woful ſpiryt in my hert
Declare a poynt of alle my ſorowis ſmert
To you my lady that I loue moſt
Right thus he quethe I the ſeruiſe of my goſt
To yow abouen euery creature
Sithnes that my lyf may no lenger dure
Alas the peyne alas the woo ſtrong

That J for you haue ſuffrid and ſo longe
Alas the deth, alas my Emelye
Allas the departynge of our companye
Alas my hertis quene, alas my lyf
My hertis lady ender of my lyf
What is the Worlde What availeth men to haue
Nolde With his loue nolde colde in his graue
Alone Withouten ony company
Fare Wel my ſWete foo my Emelye
And ſofte take me in your armes tWeye
For the loue of godde herkeneth What J ſay
J haue here With my coſyn Palamon
Hade ſtryf and rancour many a day agoon
For the loue of you, and of my ielouſye
And Jupiter ſo Wiſly my ſoule gye
As in this Worlde right nolde knoWe J non
So Worthy to be louede as Palamon
To ſerue you and Wil do al his lif
And if that euer ye ſhul be a Wif
Forȝetith not the gentyl Palamon
And With that Worde his ſpeche Was ny agon
For fro his feet vnto his breſt Was come
The colde of deth that hath hym ouercome
And yet more ouer for in his armes tWo
The vital ſtrengthe is loſt and al ago
Saue only the intellectis Withouten more
That dWellith in his herte ſike and ſore
Gan fayle Whan the herte felith deth
Duſſhidde his yen to and fayleth his breth

But on his lady yet caste he his ye
His laste wordy was mercy Emelye
His spirit chaungith the hous ꝛ wente there
As I cam neuer I can not telle where
There y stynte I am no deuynyster
Of soulis fynde I not in this registre
Ne me ne list the oppinions to telle
Though y write mighte y note where they dwelle
NOw wyl I speke forth of Emelye
That sorwbeth and cryeth I wyl not lye
Now wepith Emelye ꝛ Waylith Palamon
And Theseus his systir toke anon
Swownynge and bare hir fro the ores away
What helpith it to tary forth the day
To telle how she wepte bothe eue and morow
For in suche caas wommen haue suche sorow
Whan that her husbondis be fro hem ago
That for the more part they sorwen so
Or ellis falle in suche a maladye
That at the laste certaynly they dye
Infynyt ben the sorwis and the teris
Of olde folk and folk of tendre yeris
In al the town for deth of this theban
For hym ther wepith bothe child and man
So greet wepynge was ther non certayn
Whan Ector was brought al fresh I slayn
To Troye allas the pyte that was there
Crachynge of chekys rentynge of here
Why woldest thou be dede this wymmen crye

And hadeſt golde ynough and Emelye
No may mighte glade Theſeus
Sauynge his olde fader Egeus
That knelt this Worldis transmutacion
As he hadde ſeen it chaunge vp and doun
Joye after woo and wo after gladneſſe
And ſhewde hym enſaumple and likneſſe
Right as ther deyde neuer man quod he
That he ne louede in erthe in ſom degre
Right ſo ther lyuede neuer man he ſeyde
In al this Worlde that ſom tyme he nas deyde
This Worlde is but a throwe fare ful of wo
And we be pylgryms paſſinge to and fro
Deth is an ende of euery Worldis ſore
And ouer al this yet ſayde he mykel more
To this effect ful wiſely to enhorte
The peple that they ſholde hem recomforte
Duke Theſeus With al his beſy cure
Caſte nowe Where the ſepulture
Of goode arcite may beſt y maked be
And eke moſt honourably in his degre
And at the laſte he took concluſion
That there as firſt arcite and Palamon
Hadde for loue bataylle hem betweon
That in that ſelue groue ſwete and greon
There as he hadde his amerous deſirys
His complaynt and for loue his hote firys
He Wolde make a fire in the Whiche the office
Funeral he might fully accomplice

And leet anon to hacke and to helbe
The olris olde and ley hem on a relbe
In aulpyns Wel araid forto bremme
His officers With fWift feet they remme
And rideh anon at his comaundement
And after this Theseus hath sent
After a here and he it ouer sprad
With clothis of gold the richest that he had
And of the same he clothid arate
Up on his hondis his glouys White
And on his hed a crolbne of laurer grene
And in his hond a sWerd ful bright & shene
He layde hym bare the visage on the here
Ther With he Wepte that pite Was to here
And for the pepl sholde se hym alle
When it Was day he brought hym in to the halle
That thorough the cryynge and the solh
Tho cam this Woful theban Palamoun
With flotetid herd and ruggid asshy heris
In clothis blak droped al With teris
And passinge other of Wepinh Emelye
The reWfulleste of al the companye
In as muche the seruise shuld be
The more nobyl and riche in his degre
Duke Theseus leet thre stedis forth bringe
That trappid Were in steel al gliterynge
And coueredh With the armys of arate
Up on the stedis grete and White
Ther satyn folk of Whiche one bare his sheldh

Anothir a ſpere vpon his hondis held
The thridde baar with hym his bolde turkeys
Of brend gold was the caas and the harneys
And riden forth a paas with ſorouful chere
Toward the grove as ye ſhul aftir here
With ſlak paas and yen rede and weet
Thrwgh out the cite be the maiſter ſtrete
That ſpred was al with blac wonder hye
Right of the ſame is the ſtrete I wrye
Op on the right hond went olde Egeus
And on that othir ſide duke Theſeus
With keſſelis of gold in hir hond ful fyne
And ful of hony mylk, blood and wyne
Eke Palamon with ful greet companye
And aftir that cam woful Emelye
With fire in hond as was that tyme the gyſe
To do the office and the funeral ſeruiſe
High labour and ful greet apparelynge
Was at the ſeruiſe of that fire makynge
That with his greene top the heven raughte
And twenty fadom of brede the armys straughte
This is to ſay the bolles were ſo brood
Of ſtraw firſt was layd meny a lood
But how the fire was made vp an heyghte
And as to telle you what the treys highte
As ok firre birch, aſh, alder holm popeler
Mapil thorn, bech, aſpe, box chesteyn lynd, lauer
Wilow, elme, plane haſil and whipultre
How they were fellid ſhal not be told for me

Ne how the goddis remyn vp and down
Disperitedy of theyr habitacion
In whiche they wonedy in reste and pees
Nymphes faunus and amarides
Ne how the bestis and the brides alle
Fillen for feer whan the wode gan falle
Ne how the grounde agast was of the light
That was not wont to se the sonne bright
Ne how the fyre was colchidy first with stre
And than with drye stickys clouen on thre
And than with grene wode and spicery
And than with cloth of goldy made with perry
And garlondis hangynge with many a flour
The mirre the encence with swete odour
Ne how arcite lay amongy al this
Ne what richesse abowte his body is
Ne how that Emelye as was the gyse
Put in the fyre for funeral seruise
Ne how she swownedy whan made was the fyre
Ne what she spak ne what was her desyre
Ne what iewellis meny in to the fyre caste
Whan that the fyre was gret & brende faste
Ne how sony caste her shelde and sony her spere
And of her vestimentis whiche that they were
And cuppis ful of mylk wyne and bloody
In to the fyre that brent as it were wody
Ne how the grekis with an huge route
Thries ridyn al the fyre aboute
Op oy the lift hondy with an high showtynge

Andy thries With here speris clateringe
Andy thries holb the ladyes gay aye
Ne holb that ledy Was hombardy Emelye
Ne holb arcite is brent to asshey colde
Ne holb the lich Wakis Were y holde
That ilke nyght ne holb the grekis pleye
The Wake pleyes kepe J not to seye
Whiche Wrastelith best naked Withe oyl anointed
Ne Who that bare hym best at the poynt
J Wil not telle al holb they goon
Hom to attenes When the pley is doon
But shortly to the poynt than Wol J Wende
To make of my longe tale an ende
The proces and the lengthe of certeyn yeris
All stynt is the mornynge and the cheris
Of grekis be on general assent
Than semyth me there Was a parlement
At attenes Upon certeyn poynt and caas
Andy among the Whiche poyntis spoken Was
To haue With certayn contrees alyaunce
Andy haue fully of Thebes obeissaunce
For Whiche this nobil Theseus anon
Leet sende after gentyl Palamon
UnWist of hym What Was the cause and Why
But in his blake clothis sorowfully
He cam at his comaundement an hye
Tho sent Theseus for Emelye
Whan they Were set andy pees Was al the place
Andy Theseus abiden hath a space

Or ony Word cam from his Wyse brest
His yen he cast there as hym list
And With a sad visage he sighed stille
And aftir that right thus he sayde his Wille
The firste mouer of the cause aboue
Whan he first made the cheyne of loue
Great Was the effect & high Was the entent
Wel Wiste he Why and What ther of he ment
For With that fair cheyne of loue he bond
The fyre the eyr the Watir and the lond
In certeyn bondis that may not fle
The same prince & the same mouer quod he
Hath stablisshed in this Wrechid Worldy a drey
Certayn dayes and duracion
To al that is engendrid in this place
Ouer the Whiche day they mow not pace
Al mowe they the dayes abrigge
Ther nedith non auctorite to legge
For it is preued be experience
But that me list to declare my sentence
Than may Wel men se this ordre discerne
That ilke mouer stabyl is and eterne
Wel may men knowe but it be a fool
That euery party darreynyd fro his hool
For nature hath not take his begynnyng
Of one part or of a cantel of a thing
But of a thing that parfyt is and stable
Descendyng so tyl it be corumpabyl
And therfore for his Wyse purueaunce

He hath ſo Wel he ſet his ordenaunce
That ſpecifieth of thingis andy progreſſions
Sholdey endure he ſucceſſions
Andy nought eteryn Withoute ony lye
This maiſt thou Vnderſtonde andy ſe at ye
Lo the ook that hath ſo longy a noriſſhynge
Fro the tyme that he begynneth to ſprynge
Andy hath ſo longy lif as ye may ſe
Yet at the laſte Waſtidy is the tre
Conſidereth holde that the hardy ſtoon
Vnder our feet/on Whiche We trede andy goon
Yet Waſtith it as it lith he the Wey
The broody ryuer ſumtyme Wexith drey
The greete tolnes ſe We Wane andy Wende
Thay ye ſe that al thingy hath ay ende
Of may of Wommay ſe We alſo
That nedith in one of the termys two
This is to ſay in yongthe or ellis in age
He moot he dedy the kyngy as ſhal a page
Som in his bedy ſom in the depe ſee
Som in the large feldy as ye may ſe
Ther helpith nought.alle goy that ilke Weye
Thay may I ſay al thingy mot nedes deye
What makith this but Jubiter the kyngy
That is prince andy cauſe of al thingy
Conuertynge vs alle Vnto his propre Wil
For Whiche it is darreyneday ſoth to telle
Andy for agayns it no creature a lyue
Of no degre auaileth forto ſtryue

Thay is it Wisedom as thynketh me
To make vertu of necessite
And take it whilis we may not it eschewe
And thynketh that to vs alle it is due
And who so gruchith he doth folye
And rebel is to hym that al may gye
And certeinly a man hath most honour
To dien in his most excellent flour
Whan he is sikir of his goody name
Thay hath he do his frendy no harm ne shame
And gladder may his frendy be of his deth
Whan with honour so vp yolden is his breth
Thay whan his name appallidy is for age
For al forzetey is thay his vasselage
Thay is hit best as for a worthy fame
To dien whan he is best of name
The contrary eke for al his wilfulnesse
Why gruche we why haue we heuynesse
That goody arcite of cheualrie the flour
Departydy is with duete andy honour
Out of the foule pryson of this lif
Why gruchidy his cosyn andy his wif
Of his welfare that loueth hym so weel
Can he hem thanke nay gody woot neuer a deel
That bothe his soule andy eke hym offende
And yet they mowe her lustis not amende
What shal I conclude of this longe story
But aftir wo I rede vs be mery
And thonke Jupiter of al his grace

And er we departen from this place
I rede we make of sorwis two
O parfit ioye lastyng euer mo
And loketh now where most sorow is ynne
There wil I first amende and begynne
Sustir quod he this is my ful assent
With al the auyse of my parlement
That gentyl Palamon your owen knyght
That serueth you with herte and myght
And euer hath do syn ye first hym knewe
That ye shul of your grace on hym rewe
And take hym for husbond and lord
Lene me your hond for this is oure acord
Let se now of your wommanly pyte
He is a kyngis sones brother pere
And though he were a poure bacheler
Syn he hath serued you so meny a yeer
And had for you so gret aduersite
It moot be considered leuyth me
For gentyl mercy oughte to passe right
Than sayde he thus to Palamon the knyght
I trowe ther nedith litel sermonynge
To make you assent to this thinge
Cometh hithir and taketh your lady be the honde
And thus of hem bothe was made the bonde
That highte matrimony or mariage
By al the counsel of the Baronage
And thus with al blis and melodye
Hath Palamon wedded Emelye

And god that al this worlde hath wrought
Sende hym his loue that he dere hadde bought
For nobl is Palamon in alle wele
Lyuynge in blis in riches and in hele
And Emely hym loueth so tenderly
And he here seruith so gentilly
That ther was nowordy hem betwene
Of ielousie or of ony othir tene
Thus endith Palamon and Emelye
And god saue al this companye
¶ Here endith the knyghtis tale.
And begynneth the Milleris prologh.

Thay that ỹ knight hadde thus his tale told
In al the companye nas ther yongh ne old
That he ne sayde it was a nobyl story
And worthy to be drawe in memory
And namely the gentilis auerichon
Our hoost lowgh and swoor so mot I goon
Thus vnbokelid wel is the male
Let se nowe who shal telle another tale
For trewly the game is wel begonne
Nowe telle ye sir monk yf that ye konne
Som what to quyte with the knyght his tale
The Millward that forwronkyn was al pale
So that vnnethis vp on is hors he sat
He nolde auale nother hoody ne hat
Ne abyde noman for his curtesye
But in Pilatis vois he gan crye
And swoor he armys bloody and bonys

I can an nobil tale forthe nonys
The Whiche I Wol now quyte the knyght his tale
Our oft ſaw that he Was dronke of ale
And ſayde abyde Robyn leue brothir
Sum bettir man ſhal telle firſt anothir
Abyde let vs Worke thriftely
Be cokkis ſoule quod he that nyl not I
For I Wil ſpeke or ellis go my Wey
Our hooſt anſWerd tel on a dœuyl Wey
Thou art a fool thy Witte is ouercome
Now herkeneth quod the myllere alle & ſome
But firſt I make a proteſtacion
That I am dronke I knowe be my ſoun
And therfore yf I aught mys ſpeke or ſay
Wite it the ale of Suthwerk I you pray
For I Wol telle a legende and a lyf
Bothe of a Carpenter and of his Wif
How that the clerk hath ſet the Wrightis cappe
The reue anſWerd and ſayde ſtynt thy clappe
Let be thy lewd dronkyn harlottrye
It is ſynne and eke greet folye
To apeire ony man or hym defame
And eke bringe Wyuys in ſuche a name
Thou maiſt I nough of othir thyngis ſayn
This dronkyn Millward ſpak ful ſone agayn
And ſayde leue brothir Oſwold
Who hath no Wyf he is no cokeold
But I ſay not therfore that thou art on
Ther bith gode Wyuys many on

Why art thou angri with my tale nowe
I haue a wyf parde as wel as thowe
Yet nolde I not for the oxen in my plowe
Take vp on me more than ynowe
And deme of my self that I were one
I wolbeleue that I am none
An husbond sholde not be inquisityf
Of goddis priuitees ne of his wyf
So he may fynde goddis fuson there
Of the remenaunt nedith not to enquere
What sholde I more say but this Millere
He nolde his wordy for noman forbere
But tolde his chorlis tale in his manere
Me ouer thynketh that I shal reherce it here
And therfore euery gentyl wight I pray
Demeth not for goddis loue that I say
Not for euyl entent but that I moste reherce
Here talis al be they better or werce
Or ellis falsen som of my matere
And therfore who so listith not to here
Turne ouer the leef and chees another tale
For he shal fynde ynowe both grete and smale
Of historial thing that towchith gentilnesse
And eke moralite and holynesse
Blameth not me yf that ye chese amys
The Millere is a chorle ye knowe wel this
So is the reue and eke other mo
And harlottrye they tolde both two
Auysith you and put me out of blame

Andy eke men ſchul not make erneſt of game

Here begynneth the Milleres tale.

Whilom ther was dwellyng in Oxenforde
A riche chuf that geſtis hadde to horde
Andy of his craft he was a Carpenter
With hym ther was dwellinge a poure ſcoler
Hadde lernyd art but al his fantaſye
Was turnyd for to lerne aſtrologye
Andy coude a certeyn of concluſions
To demyn by interrogacions
If that men axed hym certayn houres
Whether they ſchold haue drought or ſchoures
Or yf that men axed hym what ſchulde befalle
Of euery thyng I may not rekene alle
This clerk was clepid hende Nicholas
Of derȝ loue he coude andy of ſolas
Andy therto he was ſly andy ful pryue
Andy lyk a mayden meke forto ſe
A chambir hadde he in that hoſtelrye
Alone without ony companye
Ful fetouſly I dight with herbis ſote
Andy he hym ſelf was ſwete as is the rote
Of licorice or of ony Cetewale
His almegeſte his bokis grete andy ſmale
His aſtrologye longinge for his art
His albegrym ſtones lay feire apart
On ſheluis colbedy at his beddis hedy
His preſſe yeuered with a foldyng reedy
Andy al aboue ther lay a gay ſaltre

On whiche he made a nyghtis melodye
So swete that al the chambir rongh
And Angelus ad Virginem he songh
And aftir that he songh the kyngis note
Ful ofteh blisfidh was his mery thwote
And thus this swete clerk his tyme spent
Aftir his sendinge and his rent
This Carpenter hade wedded a nelwe wyf
Whiche that he louyd moze than his lyf
Of .xxviij. yeer she was of age
Jelous he was and held her narow in cage
For she was wilde and yongh & he was olde
And demedh hym self lik to be a Cokewolde
He knelw not Caton for his wit was rude
That biddith a man wedde his similitude
Men sholde wedde aftir hir astate
For yonthe and old hen often at debate
But sithen he was fallen in the snare
He muste endure as othir folk his care
As ony wesil her body gent was and smal
And therto her kyrtil pynchid with a wal
A seynt she were y harrid al of silk
A barmecloth as white as morow mylk
Up on her lendis with ful meny agore
White was her smok and browdid al before
And eke behynde on hir coler aboute
Of coleblac silk withynne and without
The tapettis of her white voluper
Were of the same sute of the coler

Her filet broody of silk and set ful hye
And sikirly she hadde a likerous ye
Ful smale ypullid were her browis two
And they were brent and blak as ony sloo
She was more blisful on to se
Than is the nelbe pere genet tre
And softer than is the bulle of a beder
And by hir girdyl hangith a purs of leder
Tarselid with greene and perlid with laton
In al this worlde to seke bp and doun
Ther is noman so wyse that coude thenche
So gay a pupelot or so praty a wenche
Ful brighter was she shynynge of her hue
Than in the tour the nobyl forgid nelbe
But of her song she was as lolbde and yery
As ony walolb sittynge on the bery
Therto she coude skippe and make game
As ony kid or calf folowynge his dame
Her mouth was swete as braket or methe
Or hoord of appelis leyd on hey or hethe
Wynsynge she was as is a ioly colt
Long as a mast and bpright as a bolt
A broche she baar bp on hir lolb coler
As broody as is the boos of a bokeler
Here shoon were laced on hir leggis hye
She was a prymerolle a piggis nye
For ony lord to liggen in his bed
Or yet for ony goode yeman to wed
Nolb fire and eft fire so be fyl the cas

That on a day this hendy Nicholas
Fil With this yonge Wyf to rage & to pleye
Whylis that her husbondy Was at Osneye
As clerkis be ful subtil and ful queynt
And pryuely he caughte hir be the queynt
And sayde y Wis but yf J haue my Wylle
For dery loue of the lemman J spylle
And held here harde be the shank bones
And sayde lemman loue me at onys
Or J Wol dye al so ody me saue
And she sprongh as a colt doth in the traue
And With her hed she Wrieth faste away
She sayde J Wol not kysse the be my fay
Why let be quod she let be Nicholas
Or J Wyl crye out and allas
Do Wey your hondis for your curtesie
This Nicholas gan mercy for to crye
And spak so fayre & profred hir so fast
That she her loue graunted hym at the last
And Were her oth be saynt Thomas of kent
That she Wolde be at his comaundement
Whan that she may her leyser Wel espye
Myn husbondy is so ful of ielosye
But ye be Waar Wel and be pryue
J Wot right Wel J am but dedy quod she
Ye muste be ful dery as in this caas
Nay there of care J not quod Nicholas
A clerk hadde lowdly beset his Whyle
But yf he coude a carpenter begyle

And thus they ben accordyd and y swore
To wayte a tyme as I haue told before
Whan Nicholas hade do thus euerideel
And thackyd here aboute the lendis wel
He kiste hir swete and took his salbetye
And pleyde faste and made melodye
Than fil it thus that to the parish chirche
Cristis owen workis forto werche
This goody wyf went on an holyday
Her forhedy shoon as brighte as ony day
So was it washe whan she leet her werk
Nowl was ther of that chirche a parish clerk
The whiche was y clepyd absolon
Crulledy was his heer and as the goldy it shoon
And strowtidy as a fane large and broody
Ful streyght and euene lay his ioly shode
His rode was reedy his yen gray as goos
With powlis wyndowes corueu in his shoos
In hosis reedy he went ful fetously
I clady he was ful smal and fetously
In a kirtyl or a lityl waget
Ful faire and wel he the poyntis set
And ther vpon he hade agay surplis
As whyte as blossom on the rys
A mery childy he was so gody me saue
Wel coude he lete blody and ek shaue
And make a chartir of londy & aquytance
In twenty maners coude he trippe & daunce
After the scole of Oxenforde tho

And with his hondis caste to and fro
And pleye songis on a smale vibible
Therto he song somtyme a lowde quynybiff
And wel cowde he play on his geterne
In al the toun nas hrelle hous ne tauerne
That he ne visited with his solace
There as ony gaylard tapster was
But soth to say he was somdel skelleymous
Of fartyng and of speche daungerous
This Absolon that ioly was and gay
Goth with a senser on the holy day
Sensinge wyuys of the parish fast
And many a louely loke on hem he cast
And namely on this Carpentires wyf
To loke on hir hym thoughte a mery lyf
She was so propir swete and eek likerous
I dar wel say yf she had be a mous
And he a cat he wolde her hente anon
This parisshe clerk this ioly absolon
Hath in his herte suche a loue longynge
That of no wyf toke he non offrynge
For curtesye he sayde he wolde non
The mone whan it was nyght bright shon
And Absolon his giterne hadde I take
For paramours he thoughte forto wake
And forth he goth iolif and amerous
Tyl he cam to the Carpenters hous
A litil aftir cockis hadde I crowe
And dressed hym vp be the shot wyndowe

That was vpon the Carpenters wal
He syngith in his vois gentil and smal
O how dere lady yf thy wille be
I pray you that ye wil thynke on me
Ful wel accordyng to his giternyng
This Carpenter herde hym synge
And spak vnto his wyf and sayde anon
What alison herist thou not absolon
That chauntith thus vnder our bowris wal
And she answerde her husbond ther with al
Yes godd woot John I here it euericel
This passeth forth what wil ye bet than wel
From day to day this ioly absolon
So wobeth her that he is wo begoon
He wakith al the nyght and al the day
He kembith his lockis brode & makith hym gay
He wobeth hir be menes of brocage
And sworr he wolde be hir owen page
He syngeth brokyng as anyghtyngale
He sent a fitt of pyment methe & spiced ale
And wafris pypynge hoot out of the glede
And for she was of toun he profrid her mede
For som folk wol loue wommen for richesse
And som for strokis and some for iolynesse
Som tyme he shewith his lustinesse & maistrie
He pleyeth herodes vp on a staffolt hye
But what auaileth hym as in this caas
She louedy so this hendy Nicholas
That absolon may blowe the buckis horn

He ne hadde for his labour but a scorn
And thus she makith absolon her ape
And al his ernest turneth in to a Jape
Ful soth is this prouerbe it is no lye
Men say alwey the nyght is slye
Maketh oftymes leef for to be loth
For though that absolon were wood or wroth
Be cause that he fer was from hir sighte
This nyght Nicholas stoode in his lighte
Now here the wel now hendy Nicholas
For Absolon may wayle and synge alas
And so befil that on a saterday
This Carpenter was goon til Osenay
And eke hende Nicholas and alison
Accordid be fully to this conclusion
That Nicholas shal shapen hym a wyle
This sely ielous husbondy to begyle
And yf so be the game went a right
She sholde slepe in his armys al nyght
For this was her desire and his also
And right anon With out wordis mo
This Nicholas no lenger wolde tary
But doth ful softe in to his chambir carye
Bothe mete and drynke for a day or tweye
And to her husbondy bad her forto seye
Yf that he ayedy after Nicholas
She sholde say she nyste where he was
Of al that day she saw hym not With ye
She trowbeth that he is in sorwe maladye

For that no cry her mayde myghte hym calle
He nolde answer for no thing myghte falle
This passith forth al that saterday
That Nicholas stille in his chambir lay
And eet or sleep or dede What hym list
Tyl sonday that the some goth to rest
This sely Carpenter hath gret meruayl
Of Nicholas or What hym myghte ayl
And sayde I am adoute be semt Thomas
It stondith not aright With Nicholas
Got shilde that he deyde sodenly
This Worlde is nowe ful tikyl sikirly
I salbe a corps to day bore to chirche
That nowe amonday last I say hym Wirche
Go vp quod he vnto his knaue anon
Clepe at the dore or knocke With ston
Loke how it is and tel me boldely
This knaue goth hym vp ful sturdely
And at the chambir dore Whil that he stod
He cryde and knokked as he were Wood
What how What dost yowe Maistir Nicholay
Howe may ye slepen al the long day
But al for nought he herde not a Word
Ay hool ful lowe he sond vp on a bord
There as the cat Was Wont yn for to crepe
And at the hole he loked yn ful depe
Tyl at the last he hadde of hym a sighte
This Nicholas lay gapyng ayr vpright
As he hadde loked on the newe mone

Adoun he goth and tellith his maister sone
In what aray he salle this ilke may
This Carpenter to blisse hym began
And sayde help vs saint fridesswyde
A man woot litil what hym shal betyde
This man is falleu with his astronomye
In som woodnesse or in sum agonye
I thoughte ay wel holle it sholde be
Men sholde not knowe of goddis pryuyte
I blissed be alwey alewdy man
That nought but only his beleue can
So ferd anothir clerk with astronomye
He walked in the feldis forto prye
Upon the sterrys what ther sholde be falle
Tyl he was in a marlepit y falle
He salle not that but yet be saint Thomas
Me rewith sore of hendy Nicholas
He shal be ratyd of his studyyng
If that I may be Jhesu heuyn kyng
Gete me a staf that I may vnderspore
Whyle that thow Robyn heuyst of the dore
He shal out of this studyyng as I gesse
And to the chambir dore he gan hym dresse
His knaue was a strongh chorle for the nonys
And by the hasp he haf it vp at onys
Into the floor the dore fyl anon
This Nicholas sat as stille as ony ston
And ayr gaped vpward in the eyr
This Carpenter wende that he hadde be in despeyr

And hente hym be the sholdris mighely
And shook hym herde and cryde spetously
What Nicholay What how lokie adoun
Awake and thynk on cristis passion
I crouche the fro elfys and fro wightis
Therwith the nyghtspel sayde he anon rightis
On four halfys on the hous aboute
And on the threshold & on the dore without
Jhesu crist and seynt Benedight
Blisse this hous from euery wicked wight
For nyghtis werey the wight pater noster
Where wonnest thou saint Petris suster
And at the laste this hendy Nicholas
Gan for to sighe sore and sayde alas
Shal al the worlde be lost eftsones now
This carpenter answerd What says thou now
What thynk on god as we do men that swynke
This Nicholas answerde fette me drynke
And aftir wil y speke in to the priuyte
Of certayn thingis that touchen me and the
I wil it telle the & non othir man certayn
This carpenter goth doun & comyth agayn
And broughte of mighty ale alarge quart
And when eche of hem hadde dronke his part
This Nicholas his dore faste shette
And doun the carpenter be hym he sette
He sayde John myn hoost leue and dere
Thou shalt vp on thy trouthe swere me here
That to no wight thou shalt this counsel wrey

For it is cristis counsel that y sey
And yf thou telle it may thou art forlore
For this lengeaunce thou shalt haue therfore
That yf thou wreye me thou shalt be wood
May crist forbede it for his derey blood
Quod tho this sely man I am no blabbe
Ne though I say I am not leef to gabbe
Say what thou wilt I shal it neuyr telle
To child ne wyf be hym that harwed helle
Nowe John quod Nicholas I wyl not lye
I haue founde hit in myn astrologye
As I haue loked in the mone bright
That nowe a monday next at quartir nyght
Shal falle a rayn and that so wylde & wood
That half so gret was neuer noes flood
This worlde he sayde in lesse than in an hour
Shal al be dreynt so hidous is the shour
Thus shal mankynde drenche and lese her lif
This Carpenter answerd allas my wyf
And shal she drenche alas my alisoun
For sorowe of this he fyl almust adoun
And sayde is ther no remedy in this caas
Yes forgod quod hendy Nicholas
Yf thou wilt worke after lore and rede
Thou mayst not worke after thyn owen hede
For this sayth Salamon that was ful trewe
Worke al be counsel and thou shalt not rewe
And yf thou worke wilt be goode counsel
I vndirtake without mast or sayl

Yet shal I saue here and the and me
Hast thou not herd how saued was Noe
Whan that our lorde hadde warned hym before
That al the worlde with water sholde be lorn
Yes quod this carpenter ful yore ago
Hast thou not herd quod Nicholas also
The sorwe of Noe with his felesship
Or that he mighte gete his wyf to ship
Hym hadde leuer I dar wel vndertake
At that tyme than alle his wetheris blake
That she hadde had a ship her self alone
And therfore wotist thou what is best to done
This asketh haste and of an hasti thing
May men not preche ne make tarying
Anon go gete vs faste in to this in
A knedyng trough or ellis a kemelyn
For eche of vs but loke that they be large
In whiche we mowe swymmen as in a barge
And haue therynne vitayl sufficiaunt
But for o day fy on the remenaunt
The water shal a slake and go away
Aboute prime vp on the morwe day
But robyn may not wite of this thy knaue
Ne eke thy mayden gille I may not saue
Axe not why for though thou aske me
I wil not telle goddis priuete
It suffiseth the but yf thy wit be mad
To haue as gret a grace as Noe had
Thy wyf shal I wel saue out of doute

Go nowe thy Wey and ſpeedy the here aboute
But Whan thowe haſt for the and her and me
Y goten thyſe knedyngh tubbis thre
Than ſchalt thou honge hem in the woſ ful hye
That noman of our pryuyte aſpye
And Whan thou thus haſt don as J haue ſeyd
And haſt our victayl fayre in hem y leyd
And eke and aye to ſmyte the corde a twoo
Whan that the Watir cometh that We may go
And breke an hool an high vpon the gabyl
Into the gardeyn Ward ouer the ſtabyl
That We may frely paſſe forth our Way
Whan that the grete ſchour is paſſid away
Than ſchul We ſwymme as merily J vndertake
As doth the Whyte doke aftir the drake
Than Wyl J clepe howe aliſon howe John
Be mery for the flood Wyl paſſe anon
And thowe Wilt ſay hayl maiſter Nicholay
Gode morowe J ſe the Wel for it is day
And than ſchal We be lordis al our lif
Of al the Worlde as Noe and his Wyf
But of o thing J Warne the ful right
Be Wel auiſyd on that ilke nyght
When We be entred in to the ſchip bord
That none of vs ſpeke no Word
Ne clepe ne crye but be in his prayere
For it is goddis owen heſt dere
Thy Wyf and thowe muſt hangh fer a twyh
For that betwix you ſchal be no ſymme

Nomore in lokynge than ther ſhal in dede
This ordenaunce is do O godys the ſpede
To morow at nyght whyn folk be alle a ſlepe
Into our kuedyngh tubbis wyl we crepe
And ſittyn there abydyngh goddis grace
Go now thy wey and haue ne lenger ſpace
To make of this no lenger ſermonyngh
Men ſey thus ſendy the wyſe a ſay no thingh
Thou art ſo wyſe it nedith the not to teche
Gody ſaue our lif and J the beſeche
This ſely Carpenter goth forth his weye
And to noman wold he hit bewreye
But to his wyf he tolde this priuyte
And ſhe was waar and knew it bet than he
What al this queynte caſt was for to ſeye
But natheles ſhe ferde as ſhe wolde deye
And ſayde alas go forth thy wey anon
Help vs to ſcape or we be dedy echone
J am thy trewe wedded wyf
Go dere ſpouſe and help to ſaue our lyf
Lo whiche a gret thingh is affection
Men may dye al day of ymagynacion
So depe may impreſſion be take
This ſely Carpenter begynneth to quake
Hym thynketh verily that he may ſe
Noes flood come walowyngh as the ſe
To drenchen alifon his hony dere
He wepith waylith and maketh ſory chere
He ſighed with many a ſory ſwongh

He goth and getith hym a knedyngh trough
And after that a tub and a kemelyn
And pryuely he sent hem to his in
And hengh hem in the roof in pryuyte
With his owen hond he made laddres thre
To clymben be the rengis and the stalkis
Into the tubbis hangyngh in the balkis
And hem vitayleth bothe trough and tub
With breed and chese & good ale in a Jub
Sufficing right J nowe as for o day
But or that he hade maad al that aray
He sente his knaue and eke his wenche also
Op on his ewond to londen forto goo
And on the sonday whan it drew to nyght
He shitte his dore without candel light
And dressid al thing as it sholde be
And shortly vp they clomben alle thre
They sittyn stille wel a furlong waye
Nowe pater noster clum sayde Nicholaye
And clum sayde John and clum sayde alison
This Carpenter sayde his deuocion
And stylle he sittith and biddith his praiere
Awaytyngh on the rayn yf he it here
The dede sleep for verry werynesse
Fyl on this Carpenter right as J gesse
Aboute curfu tyme or litil more
For traueyl of his gost he gronyth sore
And eft he rowtith for his hed mys lay
Doun of the ladder stalkith Nicholay

And alison ful softe doun she spedde
Withoute wordis mo they go to bedde
Eche gan other in armes plye
There was the reuel and the melodye
And thus lieth alison and Nicholas
In besines of myrthe and solas
Tyl that the belle of laudes gan to ringe
And freris in the chaunsel gan to singe
This parish clerk this absolon
That is for loue alwey so wo be gon
Up on the monday was at Oseney
With a companye hym to disport and ply
And askid vpon a caas a cloisterer
Ful pryuely after John the Carpenter
And he drew hym apart out of the chirche
And sayde I not I salw hym here not wirche
Sith saterday I trowe that he be went
For tymbir that our abbot hath hym sent
For he is wont for tymbir for to go
And dwelle at the graunge aday or two
Or ellis he is at his hous certeyn
Where that he be I can not sothly sayn
This absolon ful ioly was and light
And thought te nowe is tyme to wake al nyght
For sikirly y salw hym not steryng
Aboute his dore syn day gan to springe
So moot y thryue y shal or cockis crowe
Pryuely knocken at his wyndowe
That stont ful lowe vp on his bowris wal

To alison nolle wol I tellen al
My loue longinge for yet I shal not mys
That at the leste wey I shal her kys
Som maner comfort shal I haue pfay
My mouth hath itched al this longe day
That is a signe of kissinge at the leste
Al nyght y mette eke that I was at a feste
Therfore y wyl go slepe an hour or tweye
Andy al the nyght than wyl I walke & pleye
Whan that the firste cok hath crowe anon
Up risith this ioly louer alsolon
Andy hym arayeth gay at poynt deuyse
But first he shewith grayn andy licoryse
To smellen swete or he hadde kempt his heer
Under his tongy a trewe loue he heer
For therby wende he to haue be gracious
He cometh to the Carpenteres hous
Andy stille he stont vnder the shot wyndowe
Vnto his brest it raught it was so lowe
Andy softe he knocketh with a sempsoun
What do ye honycombe swete alson
My feyre birde my swete cynamome
Awaketh lemman cow andy speke tome
Ful litel thynke ye vp on my woo
That for your loue y swete there I goo
No wonder is though I swelte andy swete
I mone as doth a lamb after the tete
I wys lemman y haue suche loue longynge
That lik a turtil trewe is my moznynge

I may not ete nomore than amayde
Go fro the wyndowe Jacke fool she sayde
As helpe me gode it wol not be combame
I loue another and ellis y were to blame
Wel bet than the be Jhesu absolon
Go forth thy wey or I wol throwe a stoon
And let me slepe a twenty deuyl wey
Allas quod absolon and wel a key
That trewe loue was euyr cuel be set
Than kis me syn it may be no let
For Jhesus loue and for the loue of me
Wilt thou than go thy wey there with qd she
Ye certis lemman quod this absolon
Than make the redy quod she I come anon
And vnto Nicholas she sayde stille
Now pees and thou shalt lawghe al thy fille
This absolon doun set hym on his knees
And sayde y am a lorde at al degrees
For after this y hope ther comyth more
Lemman thy grace and swete bryde thyn ore
The wyndowes she vndoth and that in haste
Haue do quod she com of and spede the faste
Lest that our neyghebouris the a spye
This absolon gan wype his mouth ful drye
Derke was the nyght as piche or wol
And at the wyndowe she put out her hool
And absolon hym fette ne bet ne wers
But with his mouth he kist her ers
Ful sauerly or he were war of this

Whan he stert and thoughte it was amys
For wel wyste he a womman hadde no herd
He felte a thing al wod and long heryd
And sayde fy alas what haue y do
Telle quod she and clappid the wyndow to
And Absolon goth forth a fory pas
A herd a herd quod hendy Nicholas
By goddis corpus this goth fair and weel
This sely absolon herde euery deel
And on his lippe he gan for angir byte
And to hym self he sayde I shal the quyte
Who rubbith now who frotith now his lippis
With dust with cloth with sond with chippis
But Absolon that saith ful ofte alas
My soule betake I saydy he to sathanas
But me were leuyr than al this towm quod he
On this despit wrokyn forto be
Alas quod he alas that I ne hadde blent
His hoot loue was cold and al queynt
For fro that tyme that he hadde kist her ars
Of paramours set he not a cars
For he was helid of his maladye
Ful ofte paramours gan he diffye
And wepte as doth a child that is bete
A softe pas he wente hym ouer the strete
Vnto a smyth men callyd dane Gerueys
That in his forge smytith plow harneys
He sharpith the share and the coltre bisely
This Absolon knockith al esely

Of al this pley agayn no word he yaf
He hadde more tolde on his distaf
Than geruais knelde and saide frendy so dere
That hoot cultre in the chymmey here
As lene it me I haue therwith to doon
And I wol bringe it the agayn ful sone
Geruais answerde certis were it golde
Or in a poke noblis al vntolde
Thou sholdest it haue as I am trewe smyth
Ey cristis foot what wil ye do ther with
Therfore quode absolon be as be may
I shal wel telle it the to morwe or day
And caughte the cultre be the colde steele
Ful softe out of the dore he gan stele
And wente vnto the Carpenteris wal
He coughed first and knokked therwith al
Vp on the wyndowe right as he dide eer
This alison answerde who is there
That knockith so y warant it a thef
Why nay quode he gode woot my swete lef
I am absolon thy owne derlinge
Of golde quode he I haue the brought a ryng
My moder yaf it me so gode me saue
Ful fyn it is and therto wel I graue
This wol I gyue the yf thou me kysse
This nicholas was risen forto pysse
And thoughte he wolde amende al the iape
He sholde kisse his ers or that he scape
And vp the wyndowe dede he hastely

And out his ars he puttith pryuely
Ouer the buttok to the shank boon
And therwith spak this clerk Absolon
Spek swete brid I not where thou art
This Nicholas anon let fle a fart
As gret as it had be a thonder dint
That with the stwok he was almost y blent
And he was redy with his yren hot
And Nicholas amyd the ers he smot
Of goth the skyn an hond brede a bowte
The hote cultre brende so his towte
And for the smert he wende forto dye
As he were wood for wo he gan crye
Help Water Water help for goddis hert
This Carpenter out of his slombir stert
And herde one crye Water as he were wood
And thought allas now comyth the flood
He set hym vp without wordis mo
And with his axe he smot the corde a two
And down goth al he fond neyther to selle
Ne breed ne ale tyl he com to the selle
Vp on the floor and there a swoun he lay
Vp stert alisoun and Nicholay
And cryde out and harow in the strete
The neyghbours both smale and grete
In rommyn forto galbryn on this may
That yet a swoun lay both pale and wan
For with the fal broste hath he his arme
But stonde he moste vnto his owbey harm

For Whan he spak he Was anon bore down
With hende Nicholas and alisoun
They tolde euery man that he Was Wood
So he Was agast of Noes flood
Thorwh fantesye that of his Vanite
He hadde bought hym kneding tubbis thre
And hadde hem hanged in the roof aboue
And that he prayde hem for goddis loue
To sitten in the woof per companye
The folk gan lawhen at his fantesye
In to the woof they kyken and they gape
And turned al his harm in to a iape
For What so euer this carpenter answerd
It Was for nought noman his reson herde
With othis grete he Was sworn adown
That he Was holde Wood in al the toun
For euery clerk right anon held Withother
They sayde the man Was Wood my leue brother
And euery Wight gan lawhe at this strif
Thus swyued Was the carpenteris Wyf
For al his keping and al his Jelosye
And absolon hath kissed her nethir ye
And Nicholas is scalded in the toute
This tale is doon and god saue al the route

Here endeth the Milleres tale +

¶ And here begynneth the Reues prologh +

Wan folk hadde lawhyn at this nyce caas
Of absolon and of hende Nicholas
Diuers folk diuersly they sayden

But for the more part they laughte & pleyden
Ne at this tale y ſalb noman hym greue
But yf it were only Oſwold the reue
Be cauſe he was of Carpenteris craft
A litil yre is in his herte y laft
He gan to gruche and blame it a lyte
Si the quod he ful wel J coude the quyte
With blerynge of a proude Mylleres ye
Yf that me liſt to ſpeke of vilanye
But y am olde me liſt not to pleye for age
Gras tyme is doon my foder is forage
This whyte top writith my olde yeris
Myn herte alſo mouldy is as myn heer is
But yf J fare as doth an open ers
That ilke fruyt is euer lenger the wers
Tyl it be rotyn in mullok or in ſtre
We olde men J drede ſo fare we
Tyl we be rotyn can we not be rype
We hoppyn alwey whyle the worlde wol pype
For in our wyl ther ſtikith euer a nayl
To haue an hoore heed and a grene tayl
As hath a leek for though our myght be goon
Our wil deſiritb fully euer in one
For whan we may nought do than wol we ſpeken
Yet in our oldy aſſhen oldy fyre is vekyn
Four gledis haue we whiche J ſhal deuyſe
Auauntyng lyynge anger and couetyſe
Thyſe four ſparkelis longith vnto eldy
Our olde lymys molde we not be beldy

But Wil ſhal not fayle that is ſoth
And yet haue I alwey a coltis toth
As many a yeer as it is paſſed heme
Sey that my tappe of lif began to reme
For ſikirly whan I was bozn anone
Deth dreW the tappe of lif and let it goN
And euer ſeth hath ſo the tappe romme
Tyl that almoſt al empty is the tomme
The ſtreme of lif noW droppith on the chymbe
The ſely tunge may Wel rynge and chymbe
Of Wrecchidneſſe that paſt is ful yore
With olde folk ſaue dotage ther is nomore
Whan that our hooſt had herd this ſermonyng
He gan to ſpeken as lordly as a kyng
And ſayde What amountith al this Wit
What ſhul We ſpeke alday of holy Writ
The deuel made a reue forto preche
Or of a ſolWter a ſhipman or a leche
Say forth thy tale and tary not the tyme
Lo depford it is halfWey to pryme
Lo greneWich that many a ſhreWe is ynne
It Were al tyme thy tale forto begynne
Now ſires quod Oſwold the Reue
I pray you alle that ye yoW not greue
Though that y anſWere a ſomdel ſette his houe
For leful is With force forto ſolWe
This dronkyn myllere hath told vs here
HoW that begiled I Was a maiſter carpentere
Parauenture in ſcorN for that I any one

And be your leue I shal hym quyte anon
Right in his chorlis termys Wol I speke
I pray to god his necke molde to breke
He can Wel in myn ye se a stalke
But in his owen he can not se a balke

Here endeth the Reues prologe.
And here begynneth his tale.

At trompyngton not fer fro Cambrige
Ther goth a brook and ouer that a brige
Vp on the Whiche brook ther stondith a mylle
And this is verey soth that I you telle
A myller Was ther dWellyng many a day
As ony peock he Was proud and gay
Pipe he coude and fisshe and nettis bete
And turne cuppis and Wel Wrastil and lepe
And by his belt he baar a long pauade
And of a sWerd ful trenchant Was the blaade
A ioly popper baar he in his pouche
Ther Was noman for peril durste hym touche
A sheffeld thWytel baar he in his hose
Round Was his face & camoysid Was his nose
Also pilled as an ape Was his skulle
He Was a market beter at the fulle
Ther durste no Wight hond Vp on hym legge
That he ne sWoor anon he sholde abegge
A thef he Was for sothe of corn and mele
And that a sligh and Vsant for to stele
His name Whas Iohn dreynus Symkyn
A Wyf he hadde come of nobyl kyn

The person of the town hir fader was
With here he yaf many a panne of bras
For that Symkyn sholde in his bloody alye
She was fostrid in a Nonnerye
For Symkyn wolde no wyfe as he sayde
But yf she were wel y norisshid and amayde
To saue his astat of yemanrye
And she was proud and pert as a pye
A ful feir sight was vp on hem two
Ay holiday before hir wolde he go
With his tipet ybounde aboute his hed
And she cam after in a gite of reed
And Symkyn hade hosen of the same
Ther durste no wight clepe hir but dame
Was non so hardy that went be the way
That with hir durste onys rage or play
But yf he wolde be slayn of Symkyn
With pauade or with knyf or bodekyn
For ielous folk ben parlous euermo
Algatis they wolde her wyues wenten so
And eke also for she was somdele smotirlich
She was as dyne as water in a dich
And ful of honour as a pismire
Here thoughte a lady sholde hir spare
What for hir kynrede and hir norture
That she hade lernyd in the Nonnerye
Noughtir hade they betwix hem two
Of twenty yeer without ony mo
Sauynge a child that was of half yeer age

In a cradyl it lay and Was a proper page
This Wenche thicke and Wel J growe Was
With Camoys nose and yen grey as glas
Buttokkis brode and brestis rounde & hye
But right fair Was her heer J Wyl not lye
The parson of the toun for she Was feyr
In purpos Was to make hir his heyr
Bothe of his catell and of his mesuage
And straunge he made it of hir mariage
His purpos Was to bestowe here hye
Onto sum Worthy blood of auncetrye
For holy chirche goodes muste be spendid
Oy holy chirche blood that is descendid
Therfore he Wolde his holy blood honoure
Though that holy chirche sholde deuoure
Gret sokyn hadde this myller out of doute
With Whete and malt of al the lond about
And namely ther Was a gret Colege
Men clepith it the soler halle of Cambregge
There Was her Whete & eek hir malt J grounde
And on a day it happed in a stounde
Seek lay the Maunciple on a malady
Men Wended Wisly that he sholde dy
For Whom this Millers stale bothe Whete & oten
Ay hundrid tyme more than he did tofore
For there before he stal but curteisly
But nowe he Was a theef ful outrageously
For Whiche the Wardeyn chidde & made fare
But therof set this Millere not a tare

He arakidy bost andy sayde it Was not so
Than Were ther pore clerkis tWo
That dueldyn in this halle of Whiche J sey
Testyf they Were andy lusty forto pley
Andy only for hir myrthe andy reuelrye
Up on the Wardeyn bisily they crye
To yeue hem leue but a litil stounde
To go to the mylle & se her corn̄ y grounde
Andy hardely they durste ley her necke
The myllere sholde not stele half a pecke
Of corny be sleyghte or by force hem tene
Andy at the laste the Wardeyn yaf hem leue
John highte that on & aleyn highte that othir
Of a toun Were they bozn that highte strodir
Fer in the north J can not telle Where
They makyn redy al hir olben gere
Andy on her hors the sackis cast anon
Forth goth aleyn the clerk andy eke John
With goody sWerdy andy bokeler by her syde
John knelb the Wey hym nedith no gyde
Andy at the mylle the sak adoun he leith
Aleyn spak first al hayl Symond in feith
Holb farith thy faire doughter andy thy Wyf
Aleyn Welcome quod Symkyn be my lyf
Andy John also What holb What do ye here
Symond quod he by godys nede hath no pere
Hym bus serue hym self that has no sWayn
Or ellis he is a fool as clerkis sayn
Our maumcypyl J hope he Wol be redy

Alla Workis ay there Wangis in his hedy
Andy therfore I is come andy this aleyn
To grynde our cozn andy cary it agayn
I pray you spede hs heyn in that ye may
It shal be do quod Symkyn be my fay
What Wil ye do Whylis it is in hondy
Be gody right be the hoper Wol I stondy
Quod Johy andy se holb the corn goos yn
Yet salb I neuyr be my fadir kyn
Holb the hoper Waggis to andy fro
Aleyn answerdy Johy Wolt thou so
Thay Wol y be benethe by my croun
Andy se hon the mele fallis adoun
In to the trowgh that shal be my disport
For Johy in faith I may be of your sort
Ay is as ille a Mylleve as is ye
This myller smyledy of her nycete
Andy thoughte al this is doy but for a Wyle
Thay Wene that nomay may hem begyle
But be my thrifte yet shal I blere her ye
For al her sleyghte andy her philosophye
The moze queynte craftis that they make
The moze shal I stele Whan I take
In stede of flour yet Wyl I yeue hem brey
The grettist clerkis be not Wisest mey
As Whilom the Wolf spak to the mare
Of al her art ne counte I not a tare
Out at the dore he goth ful pryuely
Whey that he salb his tyme softly

He lokith vp and doun til he hath founde
Thise clerkis hors where they stoode bounde
Behynde the mylle vnder a leeffeel
And to the hors he goth faire and wel
He stripith of the bridyl right anon
And when the hors were loos they gan gon
Tolward the feld where wilde maris reme
Forth with with wehy thurgh thicke & thymme
This myllere goth ayen no word he seyde
But doth his note & with the clerkis pleyde
Til that her ozen was feire & wel grounde
And whan the mele is sackid and bounde
This John goth forth & fynt his hors aweye
And gan to crye hawh and wel awey
Our hors is lorn aleyn for oolkys banys
Step out on thy feet com themys at anys
Allas our wardeyn hath his palfrey lorn
This aleyn al forgat bothe mele and ozen
Al was oute of mynde his husbondry
What whilk wey is he gon he gan crye
The wyf com rennynge vnlwardy at a renne
She saidy allas your hors goth to fenne
With wilde maris.as faste as he may go
Vnthank come on his handy that bondy hem so
And he that bettir shulde haue knyt the reyne
Allas quody John allas for cristis peyne
Ley doun thy swerdy andy I wil myn alswa
I is ful swifte.gody woot as is a raa
Be ockis herte he shal not a scape vs bathe

Why ne had thou put the capyl in to the lathe
Ille hayl be god aleyn thou is a fomme
These sely clerkis haue wel faste y comme
Tolbard the femme bothe aleyn and eke John
And when the Mylleve salw they were goon
He half a bussthel of her corn hath take
And bad his wyf go knede it in a cake
And sayde I trowe the clerkis were a ferd
Yet can a Mylleve make a clerkis herd
For al her art yet let hem go her wey
Lo where they goon so lat the children pley
They gete hem nought so lightly be my crown
Thyse sely clerkis rennyn vp and down
With kepe kepe stond stond Joffa ware deuere
Ga whistle thou there and I schal kepe hym here
But shortly til it was verily nyght
They coude not though they dede al her myght
Her capil cache he ran alwey so faste
Tyl in a diche they caughte hym at the laste
Wery and weet as beste is in the rayn
Comyth sely John and with hym aleyn
Allas quod John the day that I was born
Now are we dryuen to bethinge and to scorn
Our corn is stole men wyl vs folis calle
Both the wardeyn and our felowis alle
And namely the Myller wel a wey
Thus pleyneth John as he goth be the wey
Tolbard the Mylle and bayard in his hond
The Myller sittyng be the fyre he fond

For it was nyght & ferther mighte they nought
But for the loue of god they hym besought
Of herbergh and of ese as for hir peny
The myller sayde agayn yf ther be eny
Suche as hit is yet shulle ye haue your part
Myn hous is strait but ye haue lernyd art
Ye can be argumentis makyn a place
A myle brood of twenty foot of space
Let se nowe yf this place wol suffise
Or make it romer with speche as is your gise
Nowe Symond saide this John be saint Cutberd
Ay is thow mery and that is wel answerd
I haue herd say ỹ men shal take of twa thingis
Wilke as he fyndis or wilke as he bringis
But specially y pray the hoost so dere
Gete vs som mete & drinke & make vs chere
And we wol trewly at the fulle
With empti hondis men may not hawkis culle
Lo here my siluer redy forto spende
This myller to the toun his doughter sende
For ale and breed and rostid hem a goos
And bond her hors that he shold nomore go loos
And in his owen chamber he made a bed
With shetes & with chalous faire I spred
Not from his owen bed ten foot or twelue
His doughter hadde a bed al be her selue
Right in the same chambir by and by
It myghte be no bet the cause why
Ther was no romer herbergh in the place

They ſoupen and ſpeken of ſolace
And dronken ayr ſtrong ale atte beſte
Aboute mydnyght went they to reſte
Wel hath this Myller bernyſſhed his hed
Ful pale he was for dronke and nat red
He yexith and he ſpekith thrwh the noſe
As he were on the quacke or on the poſe
To bedde he goth and with hym goth his wyf
As ony Jay was ſhe light and iolyf
So was her ioly whiſtyl wel y wet
The cradyl at here beddis fyde was ſet
To rocken and to yeue the childe ſolke
And when that dalkyn was in the crolke
To bedde went the doughter right anone
To bedde goth aleyn and alſo John
Ther is nomore ther nedith hem no dwale
This Myller hath ſo wyſely bibbed ale
That as an hors he fuortith and ſlepe
Ne of his tayl behynde he takith no kepe
His wyf bare hym a burdon ful ſtrong
Men myghte hem here rollynge a furlong
The wenche rolled eke par company
Aleyn the clerk that herde this melody
He pokyd John and ſayde ſlepiſt thrw
Herdiſt thou ayr ſlyke a ſongh or now
Lo whilk a complyn is atwone hem alle
A wylde fyre on her bodyys falle
Who herde ayr ſwylk a ferly thingh
Ye they ſhal haue the flour of yll endyngh

This longe nyght ther tydy̆s vs no reste
But yet nofozce al ſchal be foz the beſte
For John ſayde aleyn al ſo mot I thryue
If that I may ye wenche wol I ſwyue
Som eſement hath lalbe ſchapey̆ vs
For John ther is alalbe that ſaith thus
That yf aman in o thing be agreuedy̆
That in a nothir he ſchal be releuedy̆
Our oxy̆ is ſtole ſothly hit is no nay
Andy̆ we haue hady̆ ay ayl fytte to day
Andy̆ ſyn I ſchal haue noy̆ amendement
Ageyns my loſſe I wol haue eſement
Be goddis ſale it ſchal noy̆ othir be
This John anſwerdy̆ aleyn auyſe the
The myllere is a perlous man he ſeyde
Andy̆ yf that he out of his ſlepe abzeyde
He mighte do vs hathe a felony̆
Aleyn anſwerdy̆ I counte hym not a flye
Andy̆ vp he riſt andy̆ to the wenche he creep
This wenche lay vpright andy̆ faſt ſleep
Til he ſo ny was ox ſhe myghte aſpye
That it hadde be to late foz to crye
Andy̆ ſhoztly foz to telle they were attone
Nowe playe aleyn foz I wil ſpeke of John
This John lith ſtille a furlong wey̆ ox two
Andy̆ to hym ſelf he made gret woo
Allas quod he this is a wickydy̆ Jape
Nowe may I ſay that I is but an ape
Yet hath my felow ſomwhat foz his harm

He hath the Millars doughter in his arme
He auntrid and his nedis spedde
And I ly as a draf sak in my bedde
And When this Jape is told another day
I shal be holde a daffe a cokenay
I Wyl a ryse and auntre me be my feyth
Unhardy Unsely thus men seyth
And up he roos and softly he Went
Unto the cradyl and in his arm it hent
An bare it softe Unto his beddis feet
Sone aftir the Wyf hir toBtyng leet
And gan awake and Wente hir out to pisse
And cam ayen and gan her cradyl mysse
And gropid here & there but she fond non
Allas quod she I hadde almost mysgon
I hadde almost goon to the clerkis bed
Do Wey benedicite than hadde I foule sped
And forth she goth til she the cradyl fond
She gropith alWey ferther With her hond
And fond the bed & thoughte nought but good
Be cause that the Cradyl be it stood
And nyste nauer Where she Was for it Was derk
But fayr & Wel she crepte Unto the clerk
And lith ful stille & Wolde haue caught a sleep
With ynne a Whyle this John up leep
And on this good Wyf he leyeth on sore
So mery a fytte hadde not she ful yore
He prykith harde and sore as he Were mad
This ioly lyf haue thyse two clerkis lad

Tyll that the thrídde cok began to ſynge
Aleyn wept wery in the dalwynge
For he hadde ſwonken al the longe nyght
And ſayde fare wel my fair ſwete wight
The day is come I may no lenger byde
Yet euermore where ſo y go or ryde
I am thyn owen clerk ſa haue I hele
Now dere lemman quod ſhe go fare wele
But or thow go o thíng I wol the telle
Whan that thou wendiſt homward by the melle
Right atte entre of the dore behynde
Thow ſhalt a cake of half abuſſhel fynde
That was maad of thyn owen mele
Whiche that I halp my fader forto ſtele
And gode lemman god the ſaue and kepe
And with that word almoſt ſhe gan to wepe
Aleyn vpriſt and thoughte or that it dawe
I wil go crepe yn be my felawe
And fond the cradil with his hond anon
Be god thoughte he al wrong haue I gon
My hed is toty of my ſwynk to nyght
That makith me that y go not a right
I wote wel by the cradyl I haue mys go
Here lith the myllere and his wyf alſo
And forth he goth a twenty deuyl way
Into the bed there the myllere lay
He wende haue crepen yn be his felow Johy
And by the myller yn he creep anon
And caughte hym be the necke & ſofte ſpak

He sayde thou Wynesshede awake
For cristis soule and yet here a nobyl game
For by that lordy that callyd is samt Jame
As I haue thrypys in this short nyght
Whyuyd the mylleris doughter bolt vpright
Whylis thou hast as a cowardy be agaste
Ye false harlot hast thou so hast
A fals traytour fals clerk quod he
Thou shalt be dedy be goddis dignite
Who durste be so bolde to do suche disperage
To my doughter that is of suche lynage
And be the throte bolle he canghte aleyn
And he hente hym dispitously agayn
And oy the nose he smot hym With his fist
Douy ran the blody vp oy his breest
And in the flooz With nose & mouth to broke
They Walowyd as piggis do in a poke
And vp they goon and douy ayen anon
Tyl that the Mylleve spornedy at a stoon
And douy he fyl backwardy oy his Wyf
That Wiste no thingy of this nyce stryf
For she Was falle in slepe a litil Wight
With Johy the clerk that Wakidy hath al nyght
And With the fal out of her slepe she breydy
Help holy cros of bromeholm she sayde
In manus tuas to the lordy I calle
A Wake Symondy the feendy is oy me falle
Myn herte is brokyn I am but dedy
There lieth oy my Wombe andy oy my hedy

Help Symkyn for the fals clerkis fighte
This John stert vp as faste as he myghte
And graspid he the Wallis to and fro
To fynde a staf and she stert vp also
And knelt the eftes bet than did this John
And by the Walle a staf she took anon
And saw a litil shymeryngе of a light
For at an hole yt shon the mone light
And by that light she saw hem bothe two
But sikirly she nyste who Was who
And as she saw a Whit thing in her ye
Ay Whan she gan this White thing aspie
She Wende the clerk hadde Werid a Bolupier
And With the staf she dreW ay nere and nere
And Wende haue hit this aleyn at the ful
And smoot the myller on the pilid skul
And down he goth and crydе harow I dye
The clerkis bete hym Wel and let hym lye
And greyden hem and eek hir hors anon
And eke hir mele and on her Wey they goon
And atte mylle dore yet he took his cake
Of half a bussh̄el flour Wel I bake
Thus is the proud myller Wel I bete
And hath lost the gryndynge of the Whete
And payd for the soper euerideel
Of aleyn and of John that bet hym Weel
His Wyf is swyuid and his doughtir als
Lo suche it is a mylleре to be fals
And therto this prouerbe is sayd ful soth

Hym dare not Wene Well that euyl doth
A gilour shal euer begyled be
And god that sit in high majeste
Saue al this companye grete and smale
Thus haue I quyt the Mylleve his tale

Here endith the Reues tale +

And begynneth the cokis prologh +

The cook of london Whyle the Reue spak
For ioye he coughte he clawid hym on ꝑ bak
A ha quod he for cristis owen passion
This Mylleve hath a sharp conclusion
Vp on his argument of herbegage
Wel sayde Salamon in his langage
Ne preesse not euery man in thy hous
For herborwynge be nyght is perlous
Wel ought a man auisid for to be
Whom that he bryngе in to his pryuite
I prey to god so yeue me sorwh and care
Syn auyr that I highte hogge of Ware
Herd I Mylleve let y set a Werk
He hadde a Jape of malice in the derk
But god forbede that We stynten here
And therfore yf ye Rouchesauf to here
A tale of me that am a poure man
I Wol you telle as Wel as I can
A lityl Jape that fyl in our cyte
Our ost answerd & sayde I graunte it the
Now telle on Rogger loke that it be good
For many a pasty hast thou lete blood

And many a iacke of wuyr haſt thou ſoldy
That hady be this hoot and this coldy
Of many a pilgrym haſt thou criſtis arrs
For of thy perſely yet fare they the Wers
Wold tel on gentil roger be thy name
But J pray the be not Wroth for game
A man may ſay ful ſoth in game and pley
Thow ſaiſt ſoth ſayde Roger be my fey
But ſoth pley quade pley as the flemyngh ſaith
And therfore harry bally be thy feyth
Be thow not Wroth ar We departen here
Though that my tale be of an hoſtillere
But natheles J Wil not telle it yet
But or We departe J Wis thou ſhalt be quyt
And therWith al he lowgh and made chere
And ſayde his tale as ye ſhul aftir here

Here endith the cokis prologh +
And begynneth his tale +

A Prentis Whilom duelt in our cyte
Of craft of victaillers Was he
As gaylardy he Was as goldſmyth in ỹ ſchalle
Wowy as a fery a proper felalle
With lollkis J kembidy ful fetouſly
Daunce he coude Wel and iolily
That he Was clepidy Perkyn Reuelour
He Was as ful of loue and paramour
As is the hyue ful of hony ſWete
Wel Was the Wenche ỹ With hym might ſlepe
And at euery bridale Wolde he ſynge & hoppe

The louyd bettir the nethir ende thay the shoppe
For When ther ony ridyngh Was in chepe
Out of the shoppe thyder Wolde he lepe
Tyl that he hadde al the sighte y seyn
And daunsed Wel he Wolde not come ayen
And gadrid hym a meyne of his sort
To hoppe & synge & make suche disport
And there they sette steuene forto mete
To pleyyn at the dyse in suche a streete
For in the toun Was ther no prentyse
That fayrer coude caste a peyre of dyse
Than Perkyn coude and therto he Was fre
Of his dispence in place of pryuyte
That fond his maister Wel in his chaffare
For oftyme he fond his box ful bare
For shortly a prentis that is a Reuelour
That hauntith dyse Riot and paramour
His maister shal it in his shoppe abye
Al haue he no part of the mynstralsye
For thefte and riot they be comen tibyll
Al can he pleye on gitern or Fibyble
Reuel and trouthe as in a lolle degre
They be ful Wroth alday as men may se
This ioly prentis With his maister stood
Tyl he Was neer oute of his prentishod
Al Were he styborn bothe erly and late
And sumtyme led With Reuel to Newgate
Where he his vnthriftynes sore aboughte
But atte laste his maister hym bethoughte

Vp on a prouerbe that ſaith the ſame Word
Wel bet is wtey appyl oute of hord
Then that he wtey al the vemenaunt
So ſaith it be a riotous ſeruaunt
It is ful laſſe harm to lat hym pas
Than he ſholde al the ſeruauntis in the plas
Therfore his maiſter yaf hym acquietaunce
And bad hym go With ſorou & myſchaunce
And thus this ioly prentis hadde his leue
Now let hym riot al the nyght or leue
And ther is no theef Withouten look
That helpith hym to Waſte or to ſolbke
Of that he beyde can or borowb may
Anon he ſellith his bed and his aray
Vnto a compieve of his olben ſorte
That louyth dyſe ryot and diſporte
And hadde a Wyf that held for contenaunce
A ſhoppe & ſWyued for hir ſuſtenaunce

Here endith the Colys tale And
begynneth the may of lalbis prologe

Ore hooſt ſalb that by the bright ſonne
The ark of his artificial day had ronne
The fourthe part and half an houre & moze
And theygh he Were not depeſt ſtert in lore
He Wiſte it Was the .xbiij. day
Of april that is meſſanger to may
And ſalb Wel that the ſhadolb of euery tre
Was in lengthe of the ſame quantite
That Was the body erect that cauſid it

And therfore be the shadow he took his wit
That phebus whiche that shon so clere & bright
Degrees was.xlv.clombey on height
And for that day is in latitude
Hit is ten of the clocke he gan conclude
And sodenly he plight his hors aboute
Lordingis qd he J warne you al the route
The fourthe part of this day is goon
Now for the loue of god and saint John
Lese no tyme as ferforth as ye may
Lordingis the tyme wastith bothe nyght & day
And stelith fro vs what priuely slepynge
And what thurgh negligence in our wakynge
As doth the streme that turnedy neuer agayn
Descendyng fro the mounteyn in to the playn
Wel can seneck and many a philosophir
Bewayley tyme more than gold in ofyr
For los of catell may recouered be
But los of tyme shendith vs quod he
It wyl not come ayen withouten dede
Nomore than wol malkynes maydenhede
Whan that she hath lost it in hir wantownesse
Let vs not mollyn thus in idelnesse
Ire may of lawe qd he so haue thou blis
Tel vs a tale anon as forward is
Ye be submyttyd thrwugh your fre assent
To stonden in this caas at my Jugement
Acquyte you now of your beheest
Than haue ye do your deuyr at the leest

Hoost quod he depar dieu Je assent
To breke forward is not myn entent
Behest his dette and J wolde fayn
Plese yow/and therto wole J do my payne
For suche lawe as men yeueth another wight
He sholde hym self vse it be right
Thus wol our text but natheles certeyn
J can right now no thrifty tale seyn
That Chaucer they he can but lewdly
On metris and on rymynge craftely
Hath sayd hem in suche englisch as he can
Of olde tyme as knoweth meny a man
And yf he hath not sayd hem leue brother
In o book he hath sayd hem in another
For he hath told of louers vp an down
Mo than Ouyde made of mencon
In his Epistelis that ben olde
What sholde he telle hem sith they be told
In youthe he made of Certes of alkyon
And sith he hath spoken of ecrichon
Thise nobil wyuys and thyse nobil louers eek
Who that wol his large volum seke
Cleppyd the sayntis lyuys of auyde
There may he see the large woundis wyde
Of lucrece and of babylone tisbe
The swerd of dido for the fals Enee
The swerd of phillies for here demophon
The playnte of dyanere and of armyon
Of adryane and eke of Jsiphyle

The kareyn yle stondynge in the se
The dreynt liandir for his erro
The teris of Eleyne and eke the woo
Of Briseyde and of Ladomea
The cruelte of the quene Medea
The litil childryn hangynge be the hals
For why Jason that was of loue so fals
Eppymystra Penelope and alceste
Her wyfhode comendynge with the beste
But certeynly no word ne writith he
Of that wicked ensaumpyl of Canace
That loued her owen brothir synfully
Of which cursid storyes I say fy
Or ellis of Tirus appolonius
How that the cursid kyng antiochus
Beraft his doughter of hir maydenhede
That is so horrible a tale forto rede
Whan he here throw vp on the pament
And therfore he ful of auisement
Wolde neuer write in none of his sermons
Of suche vnkind abhominacions
Ne I wol none reherce yf that I may
But of my tale what sholde I do this day
Me were loth be likned doutles
To myses that men clepe piarides
Methamorphoseos wot what I mene
But nether theles I recke not a bene
They I come aftir hym the which hath no lak
I speke in prose let hym rymes make

And with that wordy he with a ſobir chere
Began his tale as ye ſchul after here
O Hateful harm condicion of pouert
With thriſt. cold & hunger ſo cõfoundid
To aſken help the ſhameth in thy hert
Yf thou noy aſke with nede art thou ſo wound id
That every nede vnwrappith al thy wounds hid
Magre thyn hed thou muſte of indigence
Or ſtele or legge or borow thyn diſpence
Thou blamyſt crift and ſayſt ful bitterly
He mys departiht riches temperal
Thyn neyghebour thou witiſt ſynfully
And ſayſt thou haſt to lite and he hath al
Parfay ſayſt thou one day he reken ſhal
Whey that his tayl ſhal breme in the glede
For he not helpith the nedful in her nede
Herkenyth what is the ſentence of the wyſe
Bet is to dyen than to haue indigence
Thy ſelf neyghbour wol the deſpyſe
If thou be poure farewel thy reuerence
Yet of the wiſeman take his ſentence
Althey that poure men be wikk
Bewaar or thou come to the prik
Yf thou be poure thy brother hatith the
And alle thy frendis fle fro the allas
O riche marchauntis ful of wele ye be
O nobyl and prudent folk as in this caas
Your baggis bith not fillyd with ambes aas
But with ſys ſynk that temmyth in your chaunce

At Cristemasse mery mowe ye daunce
Ye sekyn lordy andy se foz your wymmyngis
Andy as wyse folk ye knowe al the state
Of reygnes that keey fadir of tidingis
Andy talis lothe of pees andy of debaat
I were right nowe of a tale desolaat
Ne were that a Marchant goy is many a yere
Me taughte a tale whiche ye mowe here
IN Surry whylom duellydy a companye
Of Chapmen riche therto sady & trewe
That wyde where sentey their spicerye
Clothis of goldy & satyn riche of hewe
Her chaffare was so trusty andy so newe
That euery wight hath deynte of her chaffare
Andy eke with hem to selle here ware
Nowe fyl it that the maistris of the sort
Haue shapen hem to Rome forto wende
Were it for chapman hoody or for disport
Noy othir message wolde they thyder sende
But cam hem self to Rome this is the ende
Andy in suche place as thoughte hem auantage
For her entent they takyn her herbygage
Soiournedy haue thyse marchantis in that towy
A certeyn tyme as fyl for her plesaunce
But so be fyl that the excellent renoury
Of the Empewours doughter name Constance
Reportedy was with euery circumstaunce
Vnto thyse marchantis in suche wyse
Fro day to day as y shal you deuyse

This Was the comyn lois of euery man
The Emperour of Rome godi hym se
A doughter hath that sith the Worlde began
To rekene as Wel her goodnes as her beaute
Was neuer suche another as Was she
I pray to godi in honour here susteyne
Andi Wolde she Were of al Europe the quene
In here is high beaute Withoute pryde
Yonghte Withoute greef or folye
To alle her Werkis vertu is her gyde
Humbles hath slayn in here al tirampye
She is a myrrour of al curtesie
Her herte is verry chambir of holyneesse
Her hondi mynyster of fredom andi of almesse
Andi al this lois is soth as godi is trew
But nowe to purpos let vs turne ayeen
Thise marchantis haue do fraught her shippis newe
Andi Whey they haue the blisful mayde seyn
Home to surry they Wente a geyn
Andi doi her nedis as they dede yore
Andi liuen Wel I can sey nomore
Now fil it ꝑ thyse marchauntis stoodi in grace
Of hym that Was the sowdon of surrye
For Whan that they com fro ony straunge place
He Wolde of his benigne curtesie
Make hem goodi chere andi bisely aspye
Tidyngis of sundry regnys forto lere
The Wondrys that they mighte se andi here
Amongi othir thingis specially

Thise marchants haue tolde of dame Costañce
So gret noblesse in erneſt certeinly
That this ſoldan hath caught ſo gret pleſañce
To haue her figure in his remembraunce
And al his luſt and al his hesy cure
Was forto loue here whilis his lif may endure
Parauenture in that large book
Whiche I clepe the heuen y wryte was
With ſterrys that he his birthe took
That he for loue ſholde haue his dth allas
For in the ſterrys clerer than is the glas
Ys writyn godi woot who ſo coude rede
The dth of euery man withouten drede
In ſterrys many a wynter there beforn
Was wryte the dth of Ector & Achilles
Of Pompey Julius or they were born
The ſtryf of Thebes and of Hercules
Of Sampſon Turnus and Socrates
The dth but memys wittis be ſo dul
That noman can rede it atte ful
This ſoldan for his pryuy counceil ſent
And ſhortly on this mater forto paſſe
He hath to hem declared his entent
And ſayde hem certeyn but he mighte haue grace
To haue Cuſtaunce in a litil ſpace
He nas but ded and chargeth hem on hye
To ſhapen for hym ſom remedy
Diuers men diuers thinges ſaiden
They argumentis caſten vp and down

Many a sotil reson forth they layden
They spak of magyk and abusion
But finally as in this conclusion
They can not see in that non auauntage
Ne in non othir Wey saue in mariage
Than salb they ther ymme suche difficultees
Be Wey of reson to speke al playn
Be cause that ther Was suche diuersitees
Betwix her botke lawes that they sayn
They trowe that no cristen prince Wolde fayn
Wedden his childn vnder our lawes swete
That vs Was taught be mahoundn our pphete
And he answerdn rathir than I lese
Custaunce I Wil be cristenedn doutles
I moot be heris I may non other chese
I pray yolb holdn your argumentis in pees
Waupth my lif and be not recheles
To geten here that hath my lif in cure
For in this Wo I may not longe endure
What nedith gretter delectacion
I say be tretyse and embassetrye
And by the Popis mediacioun
And al the chirche and al the chiualrye
That in destruction of malbmetrye
And in encrees of cristis lalbe deve
They be accordedn as ye schul here
Holb that the Solbdan and his baronage
And alle his liegis schul cristenedn be
And he schal haue custaunce in mariage

And certeyn gold I not what quantyte
And therto founde they goode surete
The same accorde was sworn in either syde
Noll fayre Custaunce almyghty gode the gyde
Noll wolde sum men wene as I gesse
That I sholde telle al the purueaunce
That the Emperour of his grete nobles
Hath shape for his doughter dame Custaunce
Wel may men knowe that so gret ordenaunce
May no man telle in a litil clause
As was araydy for so high a cause
Thi shippis ben shapen with her forto wende
Lordis and ladyes of gret renoun
And other folk ynough this is the ende
And notifyed is thorough out the toun
That euery wight with deuocioun
Sholde praye crist that this mariage
Receyue in gre and spede this viage
The day is com of hir departyng
I say that the wofull day is come
That ther may be no lenger taryynge
But forward they dresse hem alle and som
Custaunce that with sorow is al ouercom
Ful pale arisith and dresith her to wende
For wel she woot ther is non other ende
Allas what wonder it is though she wepte
That shal be sent to straunge nacion
Fro frendis that here so tenderly kepte
And to be bounde vnder subiection

Of one ſhe knowbeth not the condicion
Huſbondis been alle gode and haue be yore
That knowbe wyuys J dar ſay nomore
Fadir ſhe ſayde thy wrechid childy cuſtaunce
Thy yonge doughter foſtred vp ſo ſofte
That most you loueth with obeiſſaunce
Ouir alle thing out take crift on lofte
Cuſtaunce your childy her recommaundith ofte
Vnto your grace for J ſhal to ſurye
Me ſhal J neuer ſe you more with ye
Allas vnto the barbarik nacion
J muſte anon acordyng to your wil
But crift that deyde for our redempcion
So yeue me grace his heſtis to fulfille
J wrechid womman no fors though J ſpylle
Wommen are bozn to thraldom & to penaunce
And to be vnder mannys gouernaunce
J trowb at troye when Turnus brac the wal
Of Ilion nor brent was Thebes the Cyte
Ne Rome for the ſege of hanybal
That Romayns hadde lenguyſſhed tymes thre
Nas herdy ſuche tender wepynge for pyte
As was in the chambir for her departynge
But forth ſhe moot whether ſhe wepe or ſynge
O frosty mornynge cruel firmament
With thy dyurnal whele that crowbeſt ay
And hurteliſt al fro eſte to occidente
That naturelly wolde holde another wey
Thy crowbyng ſet the heuen in ſuche aray

At the begynnynge of this firste viage
That cruel marce hath slayn this mariage
O infortunat ascendant tortuous
Of whiche the lordy is helples falle allas
Out of his angil in to the thirde hous
O Marce ocitaser as in this caas
O feble mone vnhappy be thy paas
Thow knettist the there thou art not receyuedy
There thou art wel fro they art thou weyuydy
Imprudent Emperour of Rome allas
Was ther no philisophir in thy toun
Is no tyme bettir than anothir in this caas
Of viages is ther non election
Namely to folk of hygh condicion
Not whan a rote is of a birthe y knowe
Allas we been to lewdy and ellis to slowe
To schippe is brought this woful fayre mayde
Solempuly with euery circumstaunce
Now Jhesu crist be with you alle she sayde
Ther is nomore but far wel fayre Custaunce
She pynyth her self to make goody contenaunce
And forth I lete here saylle in this manere
And turne ayen I wol to my matere
The moder of the folwday welle of vices
Aspyedy hath her sonys playn entent
How he wolde lete his olde sacrifices
And right anon she for her counsel sent
And they be come to knowe what she ment
And whan assembliy was this folk in fere

She ſette her doun & ſayde as ye ſhul here
Lordinges quod ſhe ye knowe wel euerichon
Howe that my ſone is in poynt forto lete
The holy lawis of our alcaron
Yeuen by goddis meſſanger Machomete
But on a lowe to the grete god Jhete
The lif ſhal rathir out of my body ſterte
Or machometis loue go out of my herte
What ſholde vs tidyn of this newe lawe
But thraldom to our body and penaunce
And afterward in helle to be drawe
For we reneyed Mahoun our creaunce
But lordis wille ye make aſſuraunce
As I ſhal ſay aſſentyng to my lore
And I ſhal make vs ſauf for euermore
They ſwore and aſſented euery man
To lyue with hir and dye and by hir ſtonde
And euerich in the beſte wyſe that he can
To ſtrengthe her ſhal his frendis fonde
As ſhe that hath this empryſe take on honde
Whiche ye ſhul here as I ſhal deuyſe
And to hem alle ſhe ſpak in this wyſe
We ſhul vs firſt fayne criſtendom to take
Colde watre ne ſhal vs greue but a lyte
And I ſhal ſuche a feſte and a reuel make
That as I trowe I ſhal the ſoudan quyte
For though his wyf be criſtened neuer ſo whit
She ſhal haue nede to waſſhe alwey the rede
Though ſhe a fonte ful of water with her lede

O ſolbdannes Rote of iniquyte
Pirago thou ſamarian the ſeconde
O ſerpent vndir femenyn beaute
I lik vnto the ſerpent depe in helle I bounde
O feyned woman al that may confounde
Vertu and innocence thurgh thy malice
I bred is in the neſt of euery vice
O ſathan emnous ſyn that day
That thou were chaced from our heritage
Wel knowbeſt thou to women the olde way
Thou madiſt one to bringe vs in ſeruage
Thou wolt fordon this criſten mariage
Thyn inſtrument ſo wel a way the whyle
Makiſt thou of woman whan thou wilt begyle
This ſolbdanneſſe whom I thus blame & wery
Let priuely her counſel go her way
What ſholde I lenger in this tale tary
She ridith to the Solbdan on a day
And ſayde to hym that ſhe wolde renye her lay
And criſtendom of preſtis hond fonge
Repentyng her that ſhe hethen was ſo longe
Beſechinge hym to don her that honour
That ſhe myghte haue the criſten folk to feſte
To pleſen hem I wyl do my labour
The Solbdan ſaith I wyl do at your heſte
And knelingh thankidh her of that requeſte
So glad he was he nyſte what to ſey
She kyſſidh her ſone and home ſhe goth her wey
Aryuydh he this criſten folk to londe

In furry With a greet ſolempne ronte
And haſtely this Soldon ſente his ſonde
Firſt to his moder and to al the regne aboute
And ſayde his Wyf Was come Withoute doute
And preyde her to ryde ayens the quene
The honour of his regne to ſuſtene
Greet Was the prees and riche Was the aray
Of ſurriens and of Romayns met in fere
The moder of the ſoldon riche and gay
Reſceyuyth hir With al glady chere
As ony moder myghte her doughter dere
And to the neyte cyte there beſide
A ſofte pas ſolempuly they ride
Nought troW I the triumphe of Julius
Of Whiche that lucan makith ſuche a booſt
Was ryaller ne moze orious
Than Was the aſſemble of this blisful oſt
But this ſcorpion this Wicked goſt
The ſoldanneſſe for al hir flaterynge
Caſt vnder this ful mortally to ſtynge
The ſoldon comyth hym ſelf ſone aftir this
So rially that Wonder Was to telle
And Welcomyth hir With ioye and blis
And thus With ioye and blis I lete hem dWelle
The frupt of euery tale is forto telle
Me thoughte it Whyle tyme cam for the beſt
That reuel to ſtynt and men to go to reſte
The tyme cam this olde Soldanneſſe
Ordeyneth hath this feſte of Whiche I tolde

And to the feste cristen men dresse
In general bothe yonge and olde
There may men reuel and feste beholde
And deyntees mo than I can deuyse
But al to dere they boughte it er they ryse
O sodeyn Wo that euer art successour
To Wordly blis spreynt With bitternes
The ende of our Joy and of our Wordly labour
Wo occupieth the fyn of our gladnesse
Herkyn this counsel for thy sikernesse
Up on thy glady day haue in thy mynde
The vnwaar Wo that comyth the behynde
For shortly to telle at o Word
The soldan and the cristen euerichone
Been al to hewen and stiked at the borde
But it were only dame Custaunce allone
This olde Soldannes cursid crone
Hath With her cursid frendis there don this dede
For she her self Wolde al the contre lede
Ne there Was Surreyn none that Was conuertid
That of the counsel of the Soldan Wotith
That he nas al to hewen or he astertid
And Custaunce haue takyn as they hotith
And in a ship steerles gon it Wotith
They haue her set and bid her lerne to sayle
Out of Surrye ayen in to Jtayle
A certeyn tresour that she thyder ledde
And soth to sayn Vitayl greet plente
They haue her yeue and clothis eek she had

And forth she sayled in to the salt se
O my Custaunce ful of benignite
O Emperours yongh doughter dere
He that is lordy ouyr fortune be thy stere
She blissidy hir andy with ful pitous vois
Vnto the cros of crist saidy she
O clere O Woful auter holy croys
Rede of the lambis bloody ful of pyte
That wesshist the Worlde fro oldy iniquite
Me fro the fendy andy fro his clawis kepe
That day that I shal drenche in the depe
Victorious tre of protection trewe
That only were ordeynedy forto bere
The kyngy of heuen with his Woundis newe
The Whyte lamb that hurt Was With a spere
Flemer of fendis out of hym andy of here
Of Whiche thy lymes feithfully extende
Me kepe andy yeue me myght to amende
Yeris andy dayes fleet this creature
Thorowh out the se of greek in to the streyte
Of Marrok as it Was her auenture
O many a sory meel may she leyte
After her deth ful ofte may she Wayte
Or that the Wilde Walwes Wolde her dryue
Vnto the place Where that she shal arryue
Men myghte aske Why she Was not slayn
Andy ek atte feste Who myghte her body saue
Andy I answere to that demaunde agayn
Who sauydy Daniel in the horrible Caue

There euery Wight Were he maistir or knaue
Was With the lioun fret or he a stert
No Wight but gody that he baar in his hert
Gody lust to shelbe his Wondirful miracle
In here for she sholde se his mighty Werkis
Crist that is of euery harm triacle
Be certayn menys as knolbey clerkis
Doth thingis that for certeyn ende ful derk is
To mannys Wit that for our ignoraunce
Ne can not knolbe his prudent purueaunce
Nolb sith that she nas at the feste y stalbe
Who kepte her fro drenching in the see
Who kepte Jonas in the fisshis malbe
Tyl he Was spolbed out at nynpue
Wel may men knolbe it Was no Wight but he
That kepte the pepyl of Ebrelb fro drenching
With drye foot thorugh out the see passinge
Who hath the foure spiritis of tempeste
That polber haue to annoyen londe and see
Bothe North and south West and Est
Annoyeth neyther londy hous ne tre
Sothly the comaunder of that Was he
That fro the tempest ay this Woman kepte
As Wel Whan she Wook as Whan she slepte
Where myghte this Woman mete & drynk haue
Thre yere and more lastith her Vitayle
Who fede the Egipcian Mary in the Caue
Or in desert noy but crist sauns fayle
Fyue thousandy folk it Was a gret meruayle

With louys fyue and fyfftis two to fede
God halpe her alwey in her nede
She dryueth forth in to our ocian
Thorwh out our wyde se til at the laste
Vndir an holdy that nemene J ne can
Fer in Northumbirland the Walwys her cast
And in the sond the ship stickith so faste
That thens Wolde it not al that tyde
The Wil of crist Was there she shulde abyde
The constabil of the castel wun is fare
To se this Wrakke and al the ship he soughte
And sondy this doutif Womman ful of care
He sondy also the tresour that she broughte
In her langage mercy she be soughte
The lif out her body forto Wynne
Her to deliuer out of the Wo that she Was ynne
Amaner latyn corupt Was her speche
But algatis ther by Was she Vnderstonde
The Constabil Whan hym list no lenger seche
This Woful Womman brought he to londe
She knelith wun and thankith cristis sonde
But What she Was she Wold noman sey
For foul ne fair though she sholde dye
She saidy she Was so masidy in the se
That she forgat her mynde by her trowth
The Constabil hath of hir so gret pyte
And eke his Wyf that Wepen sore for wowth
She Was so diligent Withoute slowthe
To serue and plese euerich in that place

That al her loue that lokyn in her face
The Constabyl and dame hermegildy his wyf
Were paynemys and that contre euery where
But hermegildy louyd her as her lyf
And Custaūce hath so longe Ĵ soiourned there
In orisoury with many a bittir tere
Tyl Ihesus hath conuertid thorough his grace
Dame hermegilde the Constablis wyf of ỹ place
In al that lond no cristen durste route
Alle cristen men be fled fro that contre
Thorough paynemes that conquered al aboute
The Royame as wel by londe as by see
To Wales themme fledde the Cristiamte
Of olde britons duellyng in that Ile
Ther was no refute for the mene while
But yet nere cristen britons so eyled
That ther nas som in her priuyte
Honoured crist and hethen folk hegild
And nygh the castel suche ther dwellid there
That one of hem was blynd & myght not se
But it were with thicke yen of his mynde
With whiche they seen astir men be blynde
Bright was the sonne as in a somers day
For whiche the Constabyl and his wyf also
And Custaunce hath take the right way
Towardy the see a furlongy wey or two
To pleyen and to romen to and fro
And in this walk the blynde men they mette
Crokid and olde with yen faste Ĵ shette

In the name of crist cryde this briton
Dame Hermegilde yeue me my sighte ageyn
This lady Way afrayde of that soun
Lest that her husbonde shortly forto seyn
Wolde here for Jhesus cristis lore haue leyn
Til custaunce made her holde & bade her Wirche
The Wil of criste as doughter of holy chirche
The constabil Wepte abasshide of that sighte
Andy sayde What amountith al this face
Custaunce answerde sire it is cristis myght
That helpith folk out of the fendis snare
Andy so ferforth she gan our lalbe declare
That she the Constable or it Were eue
Comerted hath andy on crist made hym beleue
This Constable Was nothing lorde of this place
Of Whiche J spak ther he Custaunce fonde
But kepte it strongly many Wyntris space
Vndir alla kyng of al Northumbirlond
That Was ful Wyse andy Worthy of his hond
Ayens the scottis as men may Wel here
But turne ayen J Wil to my matere
Sathan that euer Wis Waytith to begyle
Sall of Custaunce al the perfection
Andy caste anon holl he mighte quyte her While
Andy made a yongh knight dWellingh in ꝑ toun
Loue here so hote of foul affection
That verily hym toughte he shal spille
But he of here onys mighte haue his Wille
He Wolwith hir but it auayleth nought

She Wolde do no syme be no Way
And for despit he compassid in his thought
To make here on shamful deth to day
He Waytith When the Constabyl is aWay
And priuely on a nyght he crepte
In hermegildis chambir Whylis she slepte
Wery forWakid in her orisons
Slepith hermegilde and Constaunce also
This knyght thorough sathans temptacions
Al softly is to the bed y goo
And kutte the throte of hermegild a tWoo
And leyde the blody knyf be dame Custaunce
And Wente his Wey there god yaue him mischaunce
Sone aftir comyth the Constabyl hom ayeen
And eke alla that Was kyngh of the lond
And saW his Wyf dispitously sleyn
For Whom he Wepte and Wrongh his hond
And in the bed the blody knyf he fonde
Be dame Custaunce allas What might she say
For verray Wo her Wit Was al aWay
To kyngh alla Was told al this myschaunce
And the tyme and Where and eke the Wyse
That in a ship Was founde this Custaunce
As here before ye me haue herd deuyse
The kyngis herte of pyte gan aryse
When he saW the benigne creature
Falle in disese and in mysauenture
For as the lomb toWard his deth is brought
So stant this Jnocent a fore the kyngh

This fals knight that hath this treson wrought
Weneth hir in hond she hath do this thyng
But natheles there was gret mornyng
Among the pepyl and sayden they can gesse
That she hadde not do so gret a wickednesse
For they haue seye here ayr so vertuous
And louyng hermegild right as her lyf
Of this haar witnesse euerich in that hous
Saue he that slow hermegild with the knyf
This gentil kyng hath caught a gret motif
Of this witnesse & thoughte he wolde enquyre
Depere in this caas and trowthe forto lere
Allas aistaunce thou hast no champion
Ne fighte cans thou not so wel alday
But he that for our redempcion
Bond sathan and yet lith there he lay
He be thy strong champion this day
For but crist open myracle kithe
Withoute gilt thou shalt be slayn as swithe
She sette hir down on her knees & thus she sayde
Immortal god that sauedist susanne
Fro fals blame and thou mercyful mayde
Mary I mene doughtir of saint anne
Before whos child aungelis syng Osanne
If I begiltles of this felonye
My socour be or ellis I shal dye
Haue ye not se sum tyme a pale face
Of hym that hath be lady in a prees
Toward his deth where he getith no grace

And ſuche a colour in the knyghtis face chees
Mey nyghte knowe his face in alle the prees
Among al the faces that was in that route
So ſtant Cuſtaunce and lokith here aboute
O quenes lynage whilom in proſperite
Ducheſſe and ladyes euerichone
Haue ſom tolde on hir aduerſite
Ay Emperours doughter ſtont allone
She woot not to whom to make her mone
O ryal lady that ſtondiſt in this drede
Fer ley thy frendes at thy greet nede
This Alla hath ſuche compaſſion
As gentil herte is fulfillyd of pyte
That from his yey ran the watir doun
Now haſtely go fet a book quod he
And yf that this knyght wol ſwere that ſhe
Hath this woman ſlayn yet wyl we vs auyſe
Whom that we wyl ſhal be our Juſtiſe
A briton book writen with euangelies
Was fet and there on he ſwoor anon
She gilty was and in the mene whyles
Ay hondy hym ſmoot vp on the necke boon
That doun he fyl at onys as a ſtoon
And bothe his yen breſt out of his face
In ſighte of euery body of that place
A voys was herd in general audience
And ſayde thou haſt diſclaundrydy giltlees
The doughter of holy chirche in high preſence
Thus haſt thou doy and yet I holde my pees

Of this meruayll agast Was al the prees
As masidy folk they stonden auerichon
For drede of Wreche saue Custaunce alone
Greet Was the drede andy eke the repentaunce
Of hem that hadde Wrongy suspection
Vp on this sely Jnocente Custaunce
Andy for this mirakil in conclusion
Andy by Custaunces mediacion
The kyngy andy many another in that place
Comtertidy Was thankidy he cristis grace
This fals knight Was slayn for his vntrouthe
By Jngement of the kyngy alla hastely
Andy yet hadde Custaunce of his deth gret routhe
Andy aftir Jhesus of his mercy
Made alla to Wedde hir solemly
This holy maidy that is so bright andy shene
Andy thus hath crist maady Custaunce a quene
But Who Was Woful yf J shal nat ly
Of this Weddyngy but dmygelde andy nomo
The kyngis modir ful of tirampe
Her thoughte her cursidy herte brast a two
She nolde not her sone hadde so do
Her thoughte a despyt that he sholde take
So straunge a creature vnto his make
Me list not of the chaf ne of the stre
Make so longy a tale as of the ozy
What sholde J telle of the ryalte
Of this mariage or Whiche ozs goth beforn
Who blowetb in a trompe or Who in a hozn

The fruyt of euery tale is for to ſey
They eet andy drank daunce ſynge andy pley
They go to bedde as it is ſkyl andy right
For though that Wyuys be ful holy thyngis
They muſte take in pacient a nyght
Suche maner of neceſſaries as been pleſingis
To folk that haue Wedded hem With ringis
Andy ley a litil her holyneſſe aſyde
As for the tyme it may non other betyde
Oy here he begate a may childy anoy
Andy to a biſſhop andy to his Conſtable eke
He took his Wyf to kepe Whey he is goy
To ſcotlondy Wardy his fomey forto ſeke
Nolw faire Cuſtaunce that is ſo humble & ſo meke
So longy is goy With childe in that ſtylle
She kepte her chambir abydyngy criſtis Wylle
The tyme is come a man childy ſhe beer
Mauricius at the fontſtoone they hym calle
This Conſtabyl doth forth come a meſſanger
Andy Wroot vnto this kyngy ꝑ clepydy Was alle
Nolw that this bliſful tidingis is be falle
Andy othir thingy Whiche Was nedeful to ſaye
He takith his lettre andy forth he goth his Waye
This meſſanger to do his auauntage
Onto the kynges moder ridith he ſWythe
Andy ſalueth here fayre in his langage
Madame quod he ye may be glady andy blythe
Andy thankey godi ay hundridy thouſandy ſithe
My lady the quene hath childy Withouteny doute

To ioye and blisse of al this regne aboute
Lo here the lettres sealid of this thing
That I muste here in al the haste I may
Yf ye Wil ought to your sone the kyng
I am your seruaunt bothe nyght and day
Dame donegelde answerde al this tym̄ nay
But here al nyght I Wol thou take thy rest
To morow I Wol sey the What me leste
This messanger dranke sadly ale and Wyne
And stolen were his lettres priuely
Out of his boy Whilis he slepte as a Swyn
And countrefetyd Was ful subtilly
Another lettre Wrought ful synfully
Unto the kyng directyd of this matere
Fro his Constabil as ye may aftir here
The lettre spak the quene deliueredy Was
Of so horrible a fendly creature
That in the Castel noon so hardy Was
There no While ony Wighte myghte endure
The modir Was an elfe be auenture
I comyn be charmes or be sorcerye
And euery Wight hateth hir in companye
Wo Was the kyng Whan he this lettre hady seen
But to no Wight he tolde his sorWis sore
But of his owen hondy he Wroot ayeen
Welcome the sonde of crist for euermore
To me that am lernedy in this lore
Lordy Welcome be thy lust & thy pleasaunce
My lust I put al in thy ordenaunce

Kepe this child al be it foul or fair
And eke my Wyf vnto myn hoom comynge
Crist Whan hym list may make me an heir
More agreabyl than this to my likynge
This lettir he selith pryuely Weppynge
Whiche to the messanger Was y take sone
And forth he goth there is nomore to doon
O messanger fulfillid With dronkenes
Straunge is thy breth thy lymys flateryn ay
And thou bewreyest al secretnes
Thy mynde is lore thou iangelist as a Jay
Thy face is turned as in a nelbe aray
There dronkenesse reygneth in ony wolbe
There is no counsel it is no doute
O donegelde J haue non englisch digne
Vnto thy malice and thy tirannye
And therfore to the feend J the resigne
Lete hym endityn of his treytory
Fy mamyssbe fy nay be god J ly
Fy feendly spirit for J dar Wel telle
Though thou here Walke thy spirit is in helle
This messanger comyth fro the kynge agayn
And at the kyngis moders court he lighte
And she Was of this messanger ful fayn
And plesid hym in al that euer she myghte
He drank and Wel his girdyl vnder pyghte
He slepith and he snortith in his gyse
Al nyght til the sonne gan aryse
After Were his lettres stolen euerichon

And̄ wuntrefetid̄ lettres in this Wyse
The kynḡ Comaundith his Constabil anon̄
Vp peyne of hongynge on high Juyse
That he ne sholde suffre in no Wyse
Custaunce in his regne forto abyde
Thre dayes and̄ a quartir of a tyde
But in the same ship as he here fond̄
Here and̄ her yonḡ sone and̄ al her geer
He sholde put and̄ croude fro the lond̄
And̄ charge hir that she come neuer aftir there
O my Custaunce Wel may thy gost haue feer
And̄ slepyn in thy dreme be penaunce
Whan̄ donegelde cast al this ordenaunce
This messanger on morow Whan̄ he Wook
Vnto the Castel holdith the neyte Way
And̄ vnto the Constabil he the lettris took
And̄ Whan̄ that he this pitous lettre say
Ful often he sayde allas and̄ Wel a Way
Lord̄ crist quod he how may this Worlde endure
So ful of syme is many a creature
O myghty god̄ yf that it be thy Wyll
Sithen thou art rightful Juge how may it be
That thou Wolt suffre innocence to spylle
And̄ Wicked̄ folk regne in prosperyte
O gode Custaunce alas so Wo is me
That I moot be thy turmentour or ellis dye
On shamful deth ther is non̄ other remedye
Wepyn̄ both olde and̄ yonge in that place
Whan̄ that the kynḡ this cursid̄ lettre sent

And Cuſtaunce With a redly & a paal face
The fayre may toWardy the ſhip ſhe Went
But neuer the lees ſhe takith it in goody entent
The Wyl of criſt andy knelynge oy the ſtronde
She ſayde ay Welcom be thy ſonde
He that me kepte fro the fals blame
Whylis that J Was oy the londy amonges you
He can me kepe fro blame & eke fro ſhame
In the ſalt ſe although ye ſe not hou
As ſtrongy as euer he Was he is right noW
In hym J truſte andy in hes moder dere
That is to me my ſayl andy eke my ſtere
Her litil childy lay Wepyngy in her army
And knelingy pitouſly ſhe ſayde
Chees litil childe J Wol do the noy harmy
With that the kerchief from her hedy ſhe brayde
And ouer his litil yen it layde
And in her army ſhe lullith it ful faſte
And in to heuene Vp her yen ſhe caſte
Moder quod ſhe andy mayde bright Marye
Soth is that thoW Womannys egement
Mankynde Was loſt & dampnydy euer to dye
For Whiche thy childy Was oy the aros to rent
Thy bliſſful yen ſaW al this turment
Thay is ther no comparyſon betWene
Thyn Wo andy my Wo that may may ſuſtene
Thou ſalW thy childzyn ſlayn a fore thyn yen
And yet noW liueth my litil childy perfay
NoW lady bright to Whom alle Women crien

Thou glorye of Whomanhedy thou faire may
Thou hauen of refut bright sterre of day
Relbe oy my childy that of thy gentilnesse
Relbest oy euery synful in distresse
O litil childy allas What is thy gilt
That neuer Wroughtest synne as yet perde
Why Wylle thy hardy fader haue the spilt
O mercy andy dere Constabil quod she
As leet my litil childy dWelle here With the
Andy if thou darst not saue hym fro blame
So kys hym onys in his fadres name
Therwith she lokith backwardy to the londy
Andy saide farewel husbondy routhlees
Andy vp she goth & Walkith doun the stronde
Towardy her ship here folowith al the prees
Andy euer she praieth hir childe to holde his pees
Andy takith her leue With ay holy entent
She blissith her andy in to the ship she Went
Vitaylidy Was the ship it is no drede
Habundauntly for her longy space
Andy othir necessaries that sholde nede
She hadde ynow heriedy be goddis grace
For Wyndy & Wedir almyghty godi purchace
Andy bryngе her hoom I say no lettir sey
But in the see she dryueth forth the Wey
A Lla the kyngy sone aftir this
Vnto his Castel of Whiche I tolde
Askedy Where his Wyf andy his childe is
The Constabil gay aboute his hert to colde

And pleynly al the maner he hym tolde
As ye haue herd I can it telle no lettir
And shewith the kyngis seel and his lettir
And sayde lordy as ye comaundith me
On peyne of deth so haue I do certeyn
This messanger turmentid was til he
Must be knowe and telle plat and playn
Fro nyght to nyght what place he hadi in layn
And thus he with subtil enquerynge
Imagened was he whom this gan sprynge
The hond was knowen that the lettir wrot
And al the tenym of this cursid dede
But in what wyse certeinly I not
The effect is this that alla out of drede
His moder slough that men may plainly rede
For she traytour was to her ligeaunce
Thus endid olde wnegelde with a myschaunce
The sorwu that this alla nyght and day
Makith for his wyf and his childy also
There is no tunge that it telle may
But now wol I to Custaunce go
That sletith in the se with peyne and wo
Fyue yeer and moze as likyd cristis sonde
Or that her ship approchid to ony londe
Under an hethen castel at the laste
The whiche the name not in my tixt I fynde
Custaunce and eke hir childy vp cast
Almyghty gody that saueth alman kynde
Haue on Custaunce & her childy sum mynde

That falley is in hethen londy eftsone
In poynt to spille as I shal telle you sone
Doun from the Castel comyth ther many a Wight
To ganryn on this ship andy on Custaunce
But shortly fro the Castel on a nyght
The lordis Stewardy gody yef hym myschaunce
A theef that hadde reyneds our creaunce
Com in to the ship allone & sayde hou she sholde
His lemman be Whether she Wolde or nolde
Tho Was this Wreachidy Wommay Wo be goy
Her childy ayde andy she pitously
But blissedy mary helpe her anon
For With her strogelingy Wel andy myghtely
The theef fil ouer the bordy al sodenly
Andy in the se he dreynt for vengeaunce
And thus hath crist vnWemmydy kept custañce
O foul lust of luxurye lo thyn ende
Not only that thou feyntist mannys mynde
But verily thou Wolt his body shende
They of thy Werk andy thy lustis blinde
Is compleynynge hou many on may men finde
That nought for Werk sumtyme but fole entent
To do this synne be othir sleyn or shent
Holy may this Week Wommay haue the strengthe
Here to defende ayens the renegat
O Golias vnmesurable of lengthe
Holy myghty Dauid made the so mate
So yongy of armure andy so desolate
Holy durste he loke vp on thy face

Wel may men ſeen it is but goddis grace
Who yaf Judith corage or hardineſſe
To ſle Olofernes in his tent
And to deliuerey out of Wreechidneſſe
The pepyl of god I ſay to this entent
That right as godȝ ſpirit and vigour ſent
To hem and ſauedȝ out of myſchaunce
He ſente ſtrengthe & vigour vnto Cuſtaūce
Forth goth her ſchip thorwh out ȳ narow mouth
Of Jubalter and ſepte Drivyngh ay
Som tyme West and ſom tyme north & ſouth
And ſomtyme eſt ful meny a Wery Way
Til cristis moder y blisſidȝ be ſhe ay
Hath ſchapey thorwh her endlees goodneſſe
To make ay ende of al her heuyneſſe
Nowh lete vs ſtynte of Cuſtaūce but a thowh
And ſpeke of Romayns the Empewour
That out of Rome hath he lettris knowhe
The ſlaughter of cristen folk and dishonour
Doon vnto his doughter he a fals traytour
I mene the cursidȝ and Wickydȝ ſowdomneſſe
That at the feſte leet ſle bothe moze and leſſe
For Whiche this Empewour hath ſent anon
His ſenatour With ryal ordenaunce
And othir lordis godȝ Woot meny on
On ſurveyens to take high vengeaunce
They bremme & ſle & bringe hem to myſchaunce
Ful meny a day but ſhortly this is the ende
Lombardȝ to Rome they ſchapen hem to Wende

This senatour repayrith With victory
To Rome Ward saylingh ful ryally
And mette the ship as saith the story
In Whiche Custaunce sit ful pitously
No thyngh knelw he What she Was ne Why
She Was in suche aray that she ne Wol sey
Of here astat though she sholde deye
He bryngith hir to Rome to his Wyf
He yaf her to here and her yongh sone also
And With the senatour ladde hir lyf
Thus can our lady brynge out of Wo
Woful Custaunce and many another mo
And longe tyme duellyd she in that place
In holy Workis euer Was her grace
The senatours Wyf hir aunte Was
But for al that she knelw her neuer the more
I Wil no lenger tarye in this caas
But to kyngh Alla Whiche I spak of yore
That hadh suche sorolwe as I saidh before
I Wol retourne and lete I Wol Custaunce
Onder the senatours gouernaunce
Kyngh Alla Whiche that hadde his moder slayn
Up on aday fil in suche repentaunce
And yf I shortly telle shal and pleyn
To Rome he cometh & receyueth his penaunce
And put hym in the Popis ordenaunce
In high and lolwe and Jhesus crist besoughte
Forgeue hym the Workis that he hath Wrought
The fame anon thorough Rome is borne

Holde alla kynge shal come a pilgremage
By herbegeous that Wenten hym beforn
For Whiche the senatour as Was the vsage
Roode hym ayens andy many of his lynage
As Wel to shelWen his magnificence
As to doon ony kynge reuerence
Gret chere doth this nobyl senatour
To kynge alla andy he to hym also
Euery of hem doth to other gret honour
Andy so be fyl that on a day or tWo
This senatour is to kynge alla go
To feste shortly andy I shal not ly
Custaunces sone Wente in his company
Sum men Wolde say at the requeste of Custaūce
This senatour hadde ledy this childy to feste
I may not telle euery Circumstaunce
Be as be may there Was he at the feste
But soth it is right at his moder heste
Beforn alla durynge the mete space
The childy stoody lokynge in the kynges face
Alla the kynge of this childy hath gret Wonder
Andy to the senatour he sayde anone
Whose is this fayre childy that stondith yonder
I not quod he be godys andy be saynt John
A moder he hath but fader hath he noon
That I of Woot andy shortly in a stounde
He tolde alla holde the childy Was founde
But godys Woot quod this senatour also
So vertuous a liuere in alle my lif

Ne ſalle I neuer ne herde of mo
Of worldly wymmen mayden wydowe or wyf
I dar wel ſay ſhe hadde leuer with a knyf
Thorowe out her breſt than he a woman wyke
Ther is noman coude beynge hir to the pryk
Nowe was this childe as lik vnto Cuſtaunce
As poſſible is a creature forto be
This alla hath the face in remembraunce
Of dame Cuſtaunce and theron muſide he
Yf that the childis moder were aught ſhe
That is his wif and priuely he ſighte
And ſpedde hym fro the tabyl al that he mighte
Parfay quod he the fantom is in myn hede
I ought to deme of rightful Jugement
That in the ſalt ſe my wyf is ded
And afterward he made his argument
What woot I yf crift haue hir hidir ſent
My wyf he ſe as wel as he her ſent
To my contre fro thens that ſhe went
And after anon hoom with the ſenatour
Goth alla forto ſe this wonder chaunſe
This ſenatour doth alla gret honour
And haſtely he ſente after Cuſtaunce
But truſt wel her luſt not to daunce
Whan ſhe wiſte wherfore was that ſonde
Vmmethis vp on her feet myghte ſhe ſtonde
Whan alla ſalle his wyf faire he her grette
And wepte that it was routhe to ſe
For atte ferſte loke that he on her ſette

He knelb Verily that it Was she
And for sorolb as doumbe stondith as a tre
So Was her herte shit in her distresse
Whan she remembrith of his vnkyndenesse
Thys she swolbnyth in his olben sighte
He Wepte and hym excusid pitously
Nolb god quod he and his halolbis bright
So Wisly on my soule haue mercy
That of your harm as giltles am J
As is my sone Maurice so lik your face
Ellis the fendy me feche out of this place
Longe Was the sobbyngy & the bitter peyn
Er that her Woful herte myghte sese
Sweet Was the pyte forto here hem complayn
Thorou Whiche pleyntis gan her Wo encrese
J pray you alle my labour to relese
J may not telle her Wo vntil to morolb
J am so Wery forto speke of sorolb
But finally Whan the soth is Wist
That alla giltlees is of hir Wo
J trolb an hundredy tymes they bekyste
And suche a blisse is there betWix hem tWo
That saue the ioye that lastith euer mo
Ther nys noon J lik that ony creature
Hath seye or shal Whylis the Worlde may dure
Tho preyde she her husbonde mekely
In relessynge of her pitous peyne
That he Wolde pray her fader specially
That by his mageste he Wolde enclyne

To Rouchesauf sumtyme With hym to dyne
She praieth hym eek he sholde be no Wey
Vnto hir fader no Word of here sey
Sum men Wolde seyn that the childe Maurice
Doth this message Vnto the Emperour
But as I gesse alla Was not so nyce
To hym that is so souereyn of honour
As he that is of cristis folk the flour
Sente ony childe but it is best to deme
He Wente hym self and so it may Wel seme
This Emperour hath grauntid gentilly
To com to dyner as he hym besoughte
This alla Was redy he lokyd byfily
Vp on this childe and on his doughter thoughte
Alla goth Vnto his Inne and as hym oughte
Araid for this feste in euery Wyse
As ferforth as his kumynge may suffise
The morow cam alla gan hym dresse
And eke his Wyf this Emperour for to mete
And forth they riden in ioye and in gladnesse
And When she saW her fader in the streete
She lighteth down and falleth hym to fete
Fader quod she your yonge childe Custaunce
Is now ful cleen out of your remembraunce
I am your doughter Custaunce quod she
That Whilom ye haue sent in to surrye
It am I fader that in the salt see
Was put alone and dampned for to dye
Now gode fader mercy I you crye

Sendy me nomore ím to hethenesse
But thankith my lordy here of his kyndenesse
Who cany the piteous ioye telle att
Betwix hem thre sithenes they be thus met
But of my tale make ay ende J shal
The day goth faste J may no lenger lette
Thise glady folk to dyner be y sette
In ioye andy blisse at mete J lete hem duelle
A thousandy foldy more than y can telle
This childy Maurice was sith Emperoure
J maady be the Pope andy liuydy cristynly
To cristis chirche dede he gret honour
But J lete al thyse storyes passe by
Of Custaunce is my tale specially
In olde Romaynes gestes mey may wel fynde
Mauricius lyf J here it not ím mynde
Thay kyngy alla whan he his tyme say
With Custaunce his holy wyf so swete
To engelondy key they come the righte way
Where as they liuey ím ioye andy ím quyete
But litylwhyle it lastedy J you hete
Joye of this worlde but a tyme it wol abyde
Fro day to nyght it chaungith as the tyde
Who liueth euer ín suche delite a day
That ne meuedy is eyther ím conscience
Oz ire oz talent oz sum kynnys affray
Enuye oz pryde oz passioun oz offence
J ne sey but foz the ende of this sentence
That litylwhyle ín ioye oz plesaunce

Lastith the blisse of alla With Custaunce
For deth that takith of hye & lolbe his rente
Whey passid was a yeer as I gesse
Out of this Worldy this kyngy alla is Went
For Whom Custaunce hath ful gret hevyneſſe
Nolb pray We to godyn his soule blesse
Andy dame Custaunce finally to say
Tolbardy the touy of Rome goth hir Way
To Rome is come this holy creature
Andy fyndeth her frendis there hole andy soundy
Nolb is she scapidy al her auenture
Andy Whey she hir fadir hath y founde
Douy oy her knees fallith to grounde
Weppynge in herte for tenderneſſe blithe
She herieth godyn a hundredy thousandy sithe
In vertu andy in holy almes dede
They liuey alle andy neuer a sonder Wende
Til deth departedy hem this lif they lede
Andy farith nolb Wel my tale is at ay ende
Nolb Jhesus crist that of his myght may sende
Joye aftir Woo gouerne vs in his grace
Andy kepe vs alle that beey in this place

Here endith the may of lalbis tale.

Andy begynneth the squyeris prology.

OVr hoost in his stirrppis stondith anoy
Andy saide godemen herkeneth euerichoy
This Was a thristy tale for the nonys
Sire parisshe preest quod he for goddis bonys
Tel vs a tale as Was thy forbardy yore

I se wel that lernyd men in lore
Comme moche goodȝ be goddis digníte
The Parson hym answerde benedicite
What eyleth the man so sinfully to swere
Oure oste answerde Jankyn be ye there
I smelle a lollere in the wyndȝ quod he
Now goodȝ men quod our host herkneth me
Abidith for goddis digne passioun
For we shul haue now a predicacion
This lollare wol preche vs here sum what
May be my fader soule that shal be nat
Sayde the squyer be shal not here preche
He shal no gospel glose here ne teche
We leue alle in the grete godȝ quod he
He wolde sowe sum difficulte
Or speynh cokyl in our clene corn
And therfore oste I warne the before
My iolyf body shal a tale telle
And I shal clynke ȝow so mery a belle
That it shal wakyn al this company
But it shal not be of philosophy
Ne of phisik ne termes queynte of lawe
There is but litil latin in my mawe

¶ Here begynneth the Squyers tale.

At sarray in the londȝ of Tartarye
There dwelled a kyng ꝑ warridȝ on russye
Thrwgh whiche ther dyde many a doughty man
This nobyl kyng was clepidȝ Cambuscan
Whiche in his tyme was of so greet renoun

That ther was nowhere in no region
So excellent a lordy in alle thinge
He lackidy nought that longedy to a kynge
As of the secte of whiche he was bory
He kepte his lay to whiche he was sworn
Andy therto he was hardy wyse andy riche
Pitous iust andy allwey y liche
Soth of his worde benigne andy honorable
Of his corage as ony tentir stabil
Yongy fressh andy strongy & in armys desirous
As ony bacheler dwellyngy in his hous
A fair psone he was andy fortunate
Andy kepte allwey a ryal astaat
That ther was nowhere suche a man
This nobil kyngy this tartir Cambuscan
He hadde two sonys on alphete his wyf
Of whiche the eldest highte Algarsyf
That othir sone was clepidy Camballo
A doughter hadde this worthy kyngy also
That yongest was andy highte Canace
But forto telle you of hir beaute
It lith not in my tunge ne in my conmyngy
I dar not take on me so high a thinge
Andy also myn englisch eke is insufficient
I muste be a clerk andy a rethour excellent
That knewe the colours longingy to that art
If I sholde discrye hir in euery part
I am no suche I muste speke as I can
Andy so be fyl this Cambuscan

Hath twenty wynter bore his dyademe
As he wente fro yeer to yeer y deme
He leet the feste of his natiuite
Done erye throwh out saray the cyte
The laste Jdus of Marche aftir the yeer
Phebus the sonne ful ioly was and3 cleer
For he was in his exaltacion
In martis face and3 in his mansion
In aries the hote colerik signe
Ful lusty was the wethir and3 benigne
For whiche the foulis ayens the sonne shene
That for the seson and3 the yonge grene
Wel loude songh here affections
Hem semyd3 to getyn ayen here protections
Agayn the swerd3 of wynter kene and3 cold3
And3 so this kyngh of whiche J you told3
In ryal festinantis sat on his deys
With dyademe ful higgh in his paleys
And3 hold3ith his feste solempne and3 riche
That in this worlde was ther non it liche
Of whiche yf J shold3e telle al the ray
Thay wold3e it occupye a someris day
And3 eke it nedith not to deuyse
At euery cours the ord3e of her seruise
J wol not telle of her strange sewis
Ne of her swannys ne of her heronsewis
Eke in that lond3 as telleth knyghtis old3e
Is sum mete that is ful deynte hold3e
That in this lond3 men reckke of it but smal

Ther is noman that may reporten al
I Wol not tarye you for it is pryme
And for it is no fruyt but los of tyme
Vnto my firste tale y Wol haue my recours
And so befil that after the thridde cours
Whyle that this kyng sat in his high nobleye
Herkenyng his mynstrallis here thing pleye
Beforn hym at his bord deliciously
In atte the halle dore sodeynly
Ther cam a knyght vpon a stede bras
And in his hond a brod myrrour of glas
And on his thomb he hadde of gold a ryng
And by his side a naked swerd hanging
And vp he rideth to the high borde
In al the halle ne Was ther spoke a Word
For meruayle of this knyght hym to be holde
And bisely they Wayten yonge and olde
The straunge knyght that cam so sodenly
Al armed saue his hed ful richely
He saluyd the kyng quene & lordis alle
By ordre as they sitten in the halle
With so high reuerence and obeisaunce
As Wel in speche as in contenaunce
That Galwey With his olde curtesie
Though he cam ayein out of feirye
Ne coude hym amende With a Word
And after this before the high lord
He With manly voys sayde his message
After the fourme vsed in his langage

Withoute fayll̃e of ſillabyl or lettir
And for his tale ſholde ſeme the lettir
Acordyng to his Wordy Was his chere
As techith art of ſpeche hem that it lere
Al be it that y can not folwne his ſtyl
Ne y can not clymbe on ſo high an hille
Than ſay J thus to the comyn entent
Thus muche amountith that he ment
If it ſo be J haue it in mynde
He ſayde the kyng of arabye and of ynde
My liege lordy on this ſolempne day
Saleweth yow as he beſt can and may
And ſendith you honour at your feſte
Be me that am al redy at your heſte
This ſtede of bras that eſely and wel
Can in the ſpace of a day natural
This is to ſay in .xxiiij. houris
Where you liſte in drought̃e or in ſhowris
Bere your body to euery place
To Whiche your herte Willith forto paſe
Withoute Wem of you thorough out foul or fair
Or yf you liſt to fle as high in the ayer
As doth an egil Whan hym liſt to ſore
This ſame ſtede ſhal bere you euermore
Withoute harm til ye be there ye liſt
Though that ye ſlepe on his bak or reſte
And turne ayen With Wringyng of a pyn
He that it Wroughte knowith many a gyn
He Waytidy many a conſtellacion

Or he hadde wrought this operacion
And knew meny a skyl & meny abonde
This myrrour eke that I haue in myn hondy
Hath suche a myght that men may in it se
Whan ther shal falle ony aduersite
Vnto your regne or vnto your self also
And openly who is your frend or foo
And ouer al this if ony lady bright
Hath set her herte in ony maner wight
If he be fals she shal his treson se
His newe loue and al his subtilite
So openly that ther shal no thing hyde
Wherfore agayns this lusty somers tyde
This myrrour and this ring as ye may se
He sente hath to my lady Canace
Your excellent doughter that is here
The vertu of this ring yf ye wol here
Is this yf that her list it forto were
Vp on here thombe or in her purs it bere
There is no foul that fleeth vnder heuyn
That she ne shal vnderstonde his steuyn
And knowe his menyng openly & playn
And answere hym in his langage agayn
And euery gras that growith vpon the rote
She shal knowe and whom it wol do bote
Al be his wounde neuer so depe or wyde
This naked swerd that hangith be my side
Suche vertu hath what man ye smyte
Thorwh out his armure it wol kerue & byte

Were it as thicke as a braunchidy ook
Andy What may it Woundith With the ſtrook
He ſhal neuer be hool til ye liſt of grace
To ſtroke hym With the plat in the ſame place
There he is hurt that is as mykyl to ſayn
Ye moot With the plat ſwerdy agayn
Stroke hem in the Wounde andy it Wol cloſe
This is a verray ſoth Withouten gloſe
It fayleth not Whylis it is in your holde
Andy When the knyght hath thus his tale tolde
He woody out of the halle andy doun he lighte
His ſtede Whiche that ſhoon as the ſonne bright
Stont in the court ſtille as ony ſtoon
This knyght in to the chambir is ledy anon
Andy is vnarmedy andy to mete y ſette
The preſentis be right richely kept
This is to ſay the ſWerdy andy the mirour
Ageen bozy anon in to the tour
With certeyn officers ordeynedy therfore
Andy vnto Canace this ringy is bore
Solempuly there ſhe ſat at the tabyl
But ſikirly Withouten ony fabyl
The hors of bras that may not be remeuydy
It ſtont as it Were in the grounde y cleuydy
For none engynys Wyndas ne polyue
They may hit out of the place dryue
Andy cauſe Why for they ony not the craft
Andy therfore in the place they haue it laft
Til that the knyght haue taught hem the maneve

To loiden hym as ye shul after here
Greet was the prees that swermyd to & fro
To galbrin on the hors that stoody so
For it so high was so broody & so longe
So wel proporcionedy to be strong
Right as it were a stede of lumbardye
Therwith so horsly andy so quyk of ye
As it a gentil polin courser were
For certis from his tayl vnto his ere
Nature ne art coude hym not amende
In no degre as al the pepyl wende
But euermore her most wonder was
Holw that it coude go andy was of bras
It was of feire as al the pepyl semyd
Syuerse folk diuersly demede
As meny hedes.as meny wittis ther been
They mormedyn as doth a swarm of been
Andy makey skillys after hir fantesie
Reherssynge of the olde poetrie
Andy sayde it was like the pegase
The hors that hade wyngis forto fle
Or ellis it was the grekis hors Symon
That brought grekis vnto destruction
As men in thyse olde gestis rede
Myn herte quod oon is euermore in drede
I trowe sum men of armys be therynne
That shape hem this cyte forto wynne
It were right goody p al suche thingy were knowe
Another rowned to his felowe lowe

And ſayde he lied for it Was rathir lik
Ay apparence maad be ſom magik
As iogelours pleyn at the feſtis grete
Of ſondry thoughtis thus they iangil & trete
As lewd pepyl demen alday comonly
Of thingis that ben maad more ſubtilly
Than they kome in here boundis comprehende
They dempyn gladly to the badder ende
And ſome of theym Wondrid on the myrour
That bozy Was vp in to the maiſtir tour
Holw men myghte in it ſuche thingis ſe
Ay other anſWerde and ſayde it may Wel be
Naturelly made by compoſicions
Of aungelis and of ſly reflections
And ſayde that in Rome Was ſuche on
They ſpak of alteon and of Vitelon
And of Ariſtotill that Writin in her liuys
Of queynte myrours and of proſpectatiuis
As knolWe they that haue her bokis herd
And othir folk haue Wondrid on the ſWerd
That Wol periſſh thorough euery thing
And fil in ſpeche of Thelephus the kyng
And of Achilles for his queynte ſpere
For he coude With it bothe hele and dere
Right in ſuche Wyſe as men may With the ſWerd
Of Whiche right noW ye haue your ſelf herd
They ſpeken of ſondry hardyng of metal
And ſpeken of medicines therWith al
And holw and thay it ſholde hardid be

Whiche vnknowe is algate to me
To speke thay of Canaces ryngh
And sayde that al suche Wonder thingh
Of craft of ringis herde they neuer noy
Saue that be moyses and be kyngh Salamon
Hadde a maner conmynge of suche an art
Thus seyn the pepyl and drawen hem apart
But neuertheles some sayde that it Was
Wonder to make of fery glas
And yet is glas not lik asshen of fery
But for they haue knowe it so fery
Therfore seith her iangelinge & her Wonder
As sore Wondre som be cause of the thundir
Oy ebbe oy flood oy gossomer & oy myste
And oy al thingh til the cause is Wyst
Thus iangelyn they and demyn & deuyse
Til that the kyngh gan from his bord aryse
Phebus hath lost the angil meredional
And yet ascendyngh Was the best ryal
The gentil lioun With his aldryan
Whan that this tartir kyngh Cambuscan
Roos from his bord there he sat ful hye
Beforn hym goth the lowde mynstralcye
Tyl that he cam to his chambir of parementis
There as they sownyn dyners instrumentis
That is lik an heuen for to here
Now daunsen lusty Venus children dere
For in the fisch her lady sat ful hye
And lokith on hem With a frendly ye

This nobil kyngh is set vp on his trone
This straunge knyght is set to hym ful sone
And on the daunce he goth With Canace
There is the reuel and the Jolite
That is nat abil a dul man to deuyse
He muste haue knowe loue and his seruise
And be as festliche man as fresh may
That shul you deuysen suche aray
Who coude you telle the fourme of daunses
So braudyng and so fressh contenaunces
And therto suche subtil lokyngis
For drede of Jelosie of mennys preysinges
No man but Launcelot and he is dede
Therfore I passe ouer of al this lustihede
I say nomore but in this iolynesse
I lete hem til men to supper hem dresse
The stiwardy biddith spicis forto hye
And eke the Wyne in al this melodye
The vssheres and the squiers ben goon
The spicis and the Wyne is comen anon
They ete and drynke & When this Was at ende
Vnto the tempyl as reson Was they wende
The seruise don they haue that day
What nedith you to rehercen here aray
Eche man Woot Wel that a kyngis feste
Hath plente to the moste and to the leste
And deyntees mo than be in my knowyngh
And after supper goth this nobyl kyngh
To se this hors of bras With al the route

Of lordis and of ladies hym aboute
Suche wondrynge was therof this hors of bras
That sethen the grete sege of troye was
There as men salw suche an hors also
Ne was ther suche a wondrynge as was tho
But finally the kynge asked the knyght
The vertu of this courser and the myght
And prayde to telle hym his gouernaunce
The hors anon gan to trippe and daunce
Whan that this knyght leyde hond on his reyne
And sayde sire ther is nomore to sayne
But if yow list to ryden ony where
Ye muste trille a pyn that stont in his ere
Whiche I shal you telle betwix vs two
Ye moot nempne hym to what place also
Orto what auntre ye list to ryde
And whan ye come there ye list abyde
Vpon hym descende and trille another pyn
For there ynne lith the effect of al the gyn
And he wol doun descende and do al your wil
And in that place he wolde abyde stil
Theygh al the worlde hadde the contrary swore
He shal not thens be dralwe ne bore
And or if you list bidde hym thens goon
Trille this pynne and he wol vanysshe anon
Out of the sighte of euery maner wight
And come ayen be it be day or nyght
What that yow list clepyn hym ayeen
In suche a gyse as I shal to you seyn

Betwene me and you and that right sone
Ride whyle you list ther is nomore to done
Enfourmed whan the kyng was of the knyght
And hath conceyued in his wit a right
The maner and the fourme of al this thing
Ful glad and blithe was this nobyl kyng
Repeyring vnto his reuel as before
The bridyl is in to the tour yboren
And kept among his iewels leef and dere
The hors vanyssheth I not in what manere
Out of her sighte ye gete nomore of me
But thus y lete in lust and in iolite
This Cambuscan his lordis festeyning
Tyl wel nygh the day he gan to springe
The norice of digestioums the sleep
Gan ov hem wynke & bad hem take keep
That muche mete and labour wol haue reste
And with a galpyng mouth he hem alle keste
And sayde it was tyme to lye a doun
For bloody was in his dominacion
Cherissheth bloody natures frend quod he
They thankyn hym galpynge by two by three
And euery wight gan drawe hym to his rest
As sleep hem bad and took it for the best
Here dremys shul not be told for me
Ful wher here heedes of fumosite
That causith dreme of whiche ther is no charge
They sleepyn til it was pryme large
The moste part but yf it were Canace

She Was ful mesurable as Wommen be
For of her fader hadde she take her leue
To go to reste sone aftir it Was eue
Here list not appalled forto be
Ne on the morow vnfestliche for to se
And slept her firste sleep and a Wook
For suche toye she in hir mirrour took
Bothe of here ring and of hir myrrour
That twenty tyme she chaungith colour
And in her sleep for here impression
Of hir mirrour she hadde a vision
Wherfore or the sonne gan vp glide
She clepid vp her maistresse here beside
And sayde that her list forto aryse
Thyse olde Wommen that ben gladly Wyse
As her maistres answerde here anon
And sayde Madame Whethir Wol ye goon
Thus erly for folk been alle in reste
I Wool quod she aryse for me leste
No lengir slepe but Walken aboute
Her maistresse clepith Wommen a greet Route
And vp they rysen Wel ten or twelue
Vp risith fresh Canace her selue
As rody and bright as the yong sonne
That in the ram is ten degrees y ronne
No higher Was she Whan she redy Was
And forth she Walkith esely a pas
Arayd aftir the lusty seson sote
Lightly forto ply and Walkyn on fote

Not but. ij. or iij. of her meyne
And in a trenche ferre in a park goth she
The vapour whiche fro the erthe glode
Makith the some to seme rody and brody
But neuerthelesse it was fair of sighte
That it made alle her hertis for to lighte
What for the seson and the Morynge
And for the fowlis that she herde synge
For right anon she wiste what they ment
Right be here song and knew al here entent
The knotte why that euery tale is told
If it be taried til lust be colde
Of hem that haue it harkened after yore
The sauour passith and euer lenger the more
For fulsamnes of prolixite
And by the same reson thinkith me
I shold vnto the knotte condescende
And make of hir walkyng an ende
A mydde a tre for drede as whyte as chalk
As Canace was pleyynge in her walk
Ther sat a fawcon ouer her hed ful hye
That with a pitous voys so gan to crye
That al the wode resowned of her crye
And eteen hadde her self so pitouslye
With bothe her wyngis til the rede blood
Ran endlong the tre as she stood
And euyr in one she cryde alwey e shright
And with her bek her self she pyght
That ther nas tigre nor cruel beste

That duellith other in Wode or in forest
That Wolde haue Wept yf he Wepe coude
For sorwe of her schriche alWey so lolde
For ther Was neuer yet man on lyue
Yf that he coude a faucon Wel deserue
Or herde of suche another of feirnes
As Wel of plumage as of gentilnes
Of shap of al that mighte rekened be
A falcon peregryn than semed she
Of fremd londe and euermore as she stode
She sWolWned nolde e nolde for lak of blode
Til Wel nygh is she falle fro the tre
This faire kyngis doughter Canace
That on her fynger baar the queynte ryng
Thorowe Whiche she vnderstood Wel euery thing
That ony foul may in his leden seyn
And coude answere in his leden agayn
She hath vnderstonde What this faucon seyde
And Wel nygh for routhe she deyde
And to the tre she goth ful hastely
And on this faucon lokith ful pytously
And heldy her lappe a broode for Wel she Wiste
The faucon muste falle fro the tWiste
Whan that it sWolWned neyt for lak of blode
Alonge While to Wayte Where she stode
Til at the laste she spak in this manere
Vnto the hawke as ye shul after here
What is the cause yf it be forto telle
That ye be in this furial peyne of helle

Quod Canace vnto this hauke aboue
Is this sorow of deth or ellis of loue
For as I trow thyse teen the causis two
That causith most a gentil herte wo
Of other harm it reckith not to speke
For your self vp on your self wolde wreke
Whiche that preuyth wel that other ire or dede
Mot be encheson of your cruel dede
Syn that I se non other wight you chace
For loue of god so do your self grace
Or what may be your help for west ne est
Sall I nayr or noll bide nor rest
That ferde with hym self so pitously
Ye sle me with your sorow verily
I haue of you so gret compassion
For goddis loue com fro the tre adoun
And as I am a kynges doughter trewe
If that I verily the causis knewe
Of your disese yf that it lay in my myght
I wolde amende it or it were nyght
As wis helpe me grete god of kynde
And herbis shal I right ynowe fynde
To hele with your hurtis hastely
Tho shright this faucon more pitously
Than euer she did and fyl to grounde anon
And lith aswowne as ded as ony stoon
Tyl Canace hath in her lappe y take
Vnto tyme she gan out of her swowne awake
And after that she out of swoun gan braide

Right in ſyr hawkis leden thus ſhe ſayde
That pyte remyth ſone in gentil herte
Feling is ſimylitude in peynes ſmerte
Is prouyd alday as men may ſe
As wel by work as by auctorite
For gentil herte kidith gentilneſſe
I ſe wel that ye haue of my diſtreſſe
Compaſſioun my faire Canace
Of ſuery wommanly benignyte
That nature in your principlis hath ſet
But for no hope forto fare the bet
But forto obeye to your herte fre
And forto make other be waar be me
As by the whelp chaſtiſed is the lioun
Right for that cauſe and that concluſioun
Whyle that I haue leyſer and ſpaas
Myn harm y wil confeſſe er I paas
And euer whyle that on ſyr ſorow tolde
That othir wepte as ſhe to water wolde
Til that the faucon had hir be ſtille
And with a ſigh thus ſhe ſaid hir wille
There y was bred allas that day
And foſtrid in a roche of marbyl gray
So tenderly that no thing aylid me
I ne wiſte what was aduerſite
Tyl I coude fle ful hye vnder the ſky
Tho dwellyd a tarcelet me faſte by
That ſemed welle of al gentilnes
Al were he ful of treſon and falſnes

That is wrappid vnder humble chere
And vnder hue of trouthe in suche manere
Vnder plesaunce and vnder besy peyne
That no wight wolde haue wendy he coude feyne
So depe in greyn he diedy his colours
Right as a serpent hidith hym vnder flouris
Til he may see his tyme forto byte
Right so this ypocryte of loue this Jpocryte
Doth so his serymoyns and his obeysaunces
And kepith in semblaunce al his obseruaunces
That sowneth vnto gentilnesse of loue
As in a tombe is al the feyr aboue
And vnder is the corps suche as ye woot
Suche was this Jpocrit bothe cold and hoot
And in this wyse he seruidy his entent
That saue the fende noman wist what he ment
Til he so longe hadde wept and compleyned
And meny a yeer his seruise vnto me feyned
Til that my herte to pitous and to nyce
Al Jnocent of his cowned malice
For ferdy of his ath as thoughte me
Vp on his othis and his fuerte
Graunte hym loue vp on this condicion
That euermo myn honour and my renoun
Were sauedy bothe pryue and apert
This is to seyn that aftir his desert
I yaf hym al my herte and al my thought
Godi woot and he and other wyse nought
And toke his herte in change of myn forr ay

But soth is said goon seth is many aday
A trelbe Wight and a theef thinke not on
And Whan he salb the thing so fer agon
That I graunti hym my loue
In suche agyse as y haue sayd aboue
And yeue hym my trelbe herte as fre
As he swoor he yaf his herte to me
Anon this tigre ful of doubilnesse
Fil on his knees With so gret humblenesse
With high reuerence and by his chere
So lik a gentil louer in manere
So rauysshed as it semed for ioye
That neuer Troylus ne Paris of Troye
Jason certis ne non other man
Syn lameth Was that alder first began
To louen tWo as Writen folk before
Ne neuer sith that first man Was born
To ony Womman Were she neuer so Wyse
So payntid he his chere at point deuyse
As Wel his Wordis as his contenaunce
And so I loued hym for his obeisaunce
And for the trolbthe I demed in his hert
That yf so Were that ony thing hym smert
Al Were it neuer so lite and I it Wiste
Me thoughte I herde deth at my herte tWiste
And shortly so ferforth this thing is Went
That my Wil Was his Willis instrument
This is to sey my Wil obeyed to his Wil
In alle thing aftir that reson fyl

Keppyng the boundis of my Worship euer
Ne neuer hadde y thing so leef ne leuer
As hym god Woot ne neuer shal nomo
This lastid lenger than a yeer or two
That I supposid of hym no thing but good
But finally thus at the laste it stood
That fortune Wolde that he must thyne
Out of that place Whiche I Was Inne
Where me Was Woo it is no questioun
I can not make of it discripcion
For o thing dar y telle boldly
I knowe What the peyne of deth is therby
Suche harm I mette that he ne mighte me leue
So on a day of me he took his leue
So sorowfully eke that y Wende verily
That he hadde felt as muche sorow as I
Whan that I herde hym speke & sawe his hewe
But neuertheless I thoughte he Was so trewe
And eke that he repayre sholde agayn
With yme a litil Whyle soth to sayn
And reson Wolde eke that he moste go
For his honour and ofte it fallith so
That I made vertu of necessite
And took it Wel syn it nedes moste be
As I best myghte I hid fro hym my sorow
And took hym be the hond seint John to borow
And I sayde thus lo I am youris al
Bothe suche as I haue be to you and shal
What he answerde nedith not to reherse

Who can ſay bet than he that can do Wers
Whan he hath al ſayd than hath he doon
Therfore behoueth hym to haue a longe ſpoon
That ſhal ete With a fende thus herde I ſay
So atte laſte he muſte forth his Way
And forth fleith til he com there hym leſte
Where it cam hym to purpos for to reſte
I trowe he hadde the text in mynde
That al thinge repeyrith to his kynde
Gladith hym ſelf thus ſey men as I geſſe
Men loue of propir kynde nedefangilneſſe
As briddis doon that men in cagis fede
For they thou nyght & day take of hem hede
And ſtrawe her cage feyre & ſofte as ſilk
And yeue hem ſuger hony breed and mylk
Yet right anon as his dore is vp
He With his feet ſpurneth doun his cup
And to the Wode he Wol and Wormes ete
So nedefangil ben they of her mete
And loue noueltees of proper kynde
No gentilneſſe of blood may hym bynde
So ferde this Tarcellet allas the day
Though he were gentil born freſh and gay
And goodly forto ſe humble and fre
He ſaw vp on a tyme a kyte fle
And ſodenly he loued this kyte ſo
That al his loue is clene fro me go
And hath his trouthe falſid in this Wyſe
Thus hath the kyte my loue in his ſeruiſe

And J am lozy Without remedy
And With that Word this fauon gan to cry
And ſwouned eft in Canaces arm
Greet Was the ſorow for the hawkis harm
That Canace and alle her Women made
They nyſte how they myghte the fauon glade
But Canace hom kerith her in her lappe
And ſoftly in plaſteris gan her Wrappe
There as ſhe With her bek hadde hurt her ſelue
How can not Canace but herbis delue
Out of the grounde and make plaſtris newe
Of herbis precious and fyne of hewe
To hele With the hauke fro day to nyght
She doth her beſines and al here myght
And by her beddis hed ſhe made a mewe
And couered it With reluettis blewe
In ſigne of trouthe that is in Women ſeen
And al Without the mewe y peyntid green
In Whiche Were peyntid al thyſe falſe foulis
As ben thyſe tidiffis tarcellis and owlis
Right for deſpyt Were peyntid her beſyde
Pies on theym forto crye and to chyde
Thus lete J Canace her hauk kepyng
J Wol as now nomore ſpeke of her Pyng
Til it come efte to purpos forto ſayn
How that this fauon gat her loue agayn
Repentyng as the ſtory telleth vs
Be mediacion of Cambalus
The kyngis ſone of Whiche J zou tolde

But hens forth I Wol processe holde
To speken of auenturis & of batayllis
That yet Was neuer herd so grete meruayllis.
First y Wol you telle of Cambuscan
That in his tyme many a cyte Wan
And eftir Wyl y speke of algarsif
Holw that he Wan Theodora to his Wif
For Whom ful ofte in greet peril he Was
Ne hadde he be holpyn be the hors of Bras
And eftir Wol I speke of Camballo
That faught in listis With brethexen tWo
For Canace or that he myghte here Wynne
And there I lefte I Wol ayen begynne
Appollo Whirleth vp his chare so high
Til that god Mercurius the sligh
Here endith the squyeris tale.
And begynneth the Marchantis prologh.
Epynge & Waylinge care & other sorWe
I knoWe I nough bothe euen & eke a morWe
Quod the marchaunt and so doth other mo
That Wedded be I troWe that it be so
For Wel I Woot it fareth so be me
I haue a Wyf the Worste that may be
For though the fend coupled to here Were
She Wolde hym ouermacche y dar Wel sWere
What sholde I you reherce in special
Her high malice she is a shreWe at al
Ther is a longh and a large difference
Betwix grisildis grete pacience

And of my Wyf the passing cruelte
Were I Vnbounde also mot I the
I Wolde neuer efte come in the snare
We Wedded men lyue in sorwe and care
A say Who so Wol and be shal synde
That y say soth be saint Thomas of Inde
As for the more part I say not al
God shilde that it sholde so be fal
A good sir oost I haue Wedded be
Thyse monethis two and nomore parde
And yet I trowe he that hath al his lif
Wedded be though men Wolde hym Ryf
Into the herte ne coude in no maner Where
Telle so muche sorwe as I nowe here
Coude telle of my Wyues cursidnes
Nowe quod our ofte marchaunt so good you blisse
Syn ye so mykil konne of that art
Ful hertely I pray you tel vs part
Gladly quod he but of myn owen sore
For sory herte I telle may nomore

Here endith the prologe+
And begynneth the Marchauntis tale+

SOm tyme ther Was duellynge in lumbardye
A Worthy knyght that borne Was at pauy
In Whiche he liuyd in gret prosperyte
And lyueer a Wyflees man Was he
And folowyd his bodily delyt
On Women Was his hool appetyt
As wol thyse folis that ben seculer

And whan that he was passid ly+yeer
Were it for holinesse or for dotage
I can not say but suche a gret corage
Hadde this knyght to be a weddid man
That day and nyght he doth al that he can
To aspye where he myghte weddid be
Prayyng our lord grauntinge that he
Myghte onys knowe that blisful lif
That is betwix an husbonde and his wyf
And forto lyue vnder the holy bond
With whiche god first man and woman bond
Noy other lif sayde he is worth a bene
For wedlok is so esy and so clene
That in this worlde it is a paradise
Thus sayde this olde knyght that was so wyse
And certeinly as soth as god is kyng
To take a wyf it is a glorious thing
And namely whan a man is old and hoor
They is a wyf the fruyt of his tresoor
Than sholde he take a yong wyf & a feir
On whiche he myghte engendre hym an heir
And lede his lif in ioye and in solace
Where as thyse bacheleers synge allas
When that they fynde ony aduersite
In loue whiche that is but childis lanite
And trewly it sit wel to be so
That bacheleers haue ofte peyne and woo
On brotil ground they bilde brotilnesse
They fynde freelte whan they wene sikirnesse

They lyue but as a bryd or as a beſt
In libertē and vnder noy areeſt
There as a weddid may is in aſtaat
Liueth his lif blisful and ordinate
Vnder the yok of mariage I bounde
Wel may his hertē in ioye & blisse habounde
For who can be ſo buxum as a wyf
Who is ſo trewe who is ſo tentif
To kepe hym ſeek and hool and is his make
For weel or woo ſhe wol nat hym forſake
She is nat wery hym to loue and ſerue
Though he lye bedrede til he ſterue
And yet ſome clerkis ſayn it is not ſo
Of whiche Theophraſte is on of tho
What fors theygh Theophraſte woth lye
Ne take no wyf quod he for huſbondrye
As forto ſpare in houſholde thyn expence
A trewe ſeruaunt doth more diligence
Thy goody to kepe than doth thy ſelf wyf
For ſhe wol clayme half part al her lif
And yf that thow be ſeek ſo gody me ſaue
Thy verry frendis or a trewe knaue
Wol kepe the bet than ſhe that waytith ay
After thy goody and hath do meny a day
But take no kepe of ſuche vanyte
Do fy Theophraſte and herkeyn me
A wyf is goddis ziſte verily
Al other maner ziftis hardely

As londis rentis pasturis and⁹ cõmune
Or othir yeftis meuable of fortune
That passen as a shadow on a wal
But drede not yf J playnly speke shal
A wyf will laste and⁹ in thy hous endure
Wel lenger than the liste pauenture
Mariage is a ful greet sacrament
Who that hath no wyf is but shent
He liuyth helples and⁹ is al desolat
J speke of folk in seculer astat
And⁹ herken why y say not this for nought
The Womman is for mannys help y wrought
The high god⁹ whan he hadde Adam makid⁹
And⁹ saw hym allone lely nakid⁹
God⁹ of his grete goodnesse sayde than
Let vs now make an help to this man
Lik to hym self and⁹ than he made eue
Here may ye se and⁹ here by preue
That a wyf is mannys help & his comfort
His paradyse terrestre and⁹ his disport
So buxum and⁹ so vertuous is she
They muste nedis liue in vnite
O flesh they be and⁹ of o blood⁹ J gesse
Not but one herte in wyl and⁹ in distresse
A wyf a sayncte mary benedicite
How mighte a man haue ony aduersite
That hath a wyf certis J can not sey
The blisse that is bet wix hem they
Ther may no tunge telle it or herte thynke

If he be poure ſhe helpith hym to ſwynke
She kepith his goody & waſtith it neuer a deel
Andy al that her huſbondy luſt ſhe likith weel
She ſaith not onys nay whan he ſaith ye
Do this ſaith he al redy ſire ſaith ſhe
O blïſful ordre o wedlok precious
Thou art ſo mery andy eek ſo joyous
Andy ſo comendidy andy approuedy eke
That euery man that holdeth hym worth a leek
Up on his bare knees oughte al his lif
Thankïng his godi that hym ſent a wyf
Or elſis praye godi hym forto ſende
A wyf to laſte to his liues ende
For than his lif is ſet in ſikirneſſe
He may not be diſceyuedy as y geſſe
So that he worke aftir his wyues rede
Than may he boldely bere up his hede
They be ſo trewe/andy therto eke ſo wyſe
For whiche yf thou wolt worche as the wyſe
Do alwey as the woman wol the rede
Lo holy jacob as thyſe clerkis rede
Be goody counſel of his moder rebekk
Bondy the kiddis ſkyn aboute his nekk
For whiche his fadris benyſon he wan
Lo judith as the ſtory wel telle can
Be wyſe counſel ſhe goddis pepil kepte
Andy ſlew hym olofernes whyle he ſlepte
Lo holy abigayl be goody counſel that ſhe
Sauedy her huſbonde nabal whan that he

Shulde haue he ſlayn andy loke hester alſo
Be goody counſel deliuered y out of Wo
The pepyl of gody andy made Mardoche
Of aſſuere enhaunced y forto he
Ther is no thing y in gre ſuperlatif
As ſaith Senek aboue ay humble Wyf
Suffre thy Wyuys tunge as Caton bit
She ſhal comaunde andy thou ſhalt ſuffre it
Andy yet ſhe Wylle obeye of curteſie
A Wyf is keper of thy huſbondrye
Wel may the ſeek may hewayle andy Wepe
There as no Wyf is the hous to kepe
I Warne the if thou Wyſely Wilt Wirche
Loue Wel thy Wyf as crift loueth his chirche
If thou loueſt thy ſelf thou loueſt thy Wyf
Noman hatith his fleſſh but in his lif
He ſuffrith it andy therfore bidde I the
Cheriſſhe thy Wyf or thou ſhalt neuer the
Huſbonde andy Wyf What ſo men iape or pley
Of Wordly folk holden the right Wey
They been kuyt thermay no harm betide
Andy namely on the Wyuys ſide
For Whiche this Jamtary of Whiche I tolde
Conſideryth hath in his dayes olde
The lusty lif the vertuous quyete
That is in mariage hony ſWete
Andy for his frendis on aday he ſent
To telle the effect of his entent
With face ſady he hath his tale to hem tolde

He sayde frendis I am hoor and old
And almost god woot at my pittis brynke
Vp on my soule somwhat moste y thinke
I haue my body folily dispendid
I blissid be god it shal be amendid
For I wol be certeyn a weddid man
And that in al the haste that I can
Vnto som mayde fair and tender of age
I pray you shapith for my mariage
Al sodenly for I wol not abyde
And I wol fonde to aspye on my side
To whom y may be weddid hastely
But for as muche as ye be mo than I
Ye shul rather suche a thing espyen
Than I and where me list best alien
But o thing I warne you my frendis dere
I wyl noon old wyf haue in no manere
She shal not passe .xxj. yeer certayn
Old flesh wolde haue yong flesh fayn
Bet is a pyke than a pykerel
Better than olde beef is the tender veel
I wol no woman of twenty yeer of age
It is but lene straw and greet forage
And eke thyse olde wydowes god it woot
They conne so mykyl craft of wadis boot
So mykyl harm what that hem list
That with hem sholde I neuer lyue in rest
For sondry scolis makith subtil clerkis
Woman of many a scole half a clerk is

But certeinly a yongh thingh may meyn gye
Right as a man With hondis warm Wepe plye
Therfore J say you pleynly in a clause
J Wol non olde Wyf haue for this cause
For yf so were yf y hadde suche myschaunce
That J in here coude haue no plesaunce
Than sholde J lede my lif in a Wontrye
And so streight to the deuel Whan y dye
Ne childreyn sholde J non on here getyn
Yet hadde J leuyr houndis hadde me etyn
Than that myn heritage shulde falle
In straunge hondy & thus J telle you al
J doute not J Woot the cause Why
Men sholde Wedde and ferthermore Woot J
There spekith meny men of mariage
That Woot nomore of it than doth my page
For Whiche causis men sholde take a Wyf
Yf he may not chast be. be his Wyf
Take hym a Wyf With greet deuocion
Be cause of lefful procreacion
Of childryn to the honour of gody aboue
And not only for paramour ne for loue
And for they sholde lecherye eschue
And yelde her dette While it is nelwe
Or for that eche man sholde helpe othir
In myschief as the fustir shal the brothir
And lyue in chastite ful heuenly
But sires be your leue that am not J
For gody bethankid J dar make auaunt

I fele my lymys ſtark and ſufficiaunt
To do al that a man behoueth to do
And am ſtrong ynough to ride or goo
Though I be hoor and fare as doth a tre
That bloſmeth or that the tre grene be
A bloſmedy tre is neyther drye ne dedy
I fele me no where hoor but on myn hedy
My herte and my lymes is ay grene
As laurer that throwh the yeer is ſene
And ſithnys ye haue herd al myn entent
I pray you that to my Wyl ye aſſent
Diuers men diuerſly hym tolde
Of mariage meny enſamplis olde
Som blamedy it ſome preyſidy it certeyn
But at the laſte ſhortly forto ſeyn
As alday falleth altercacion
Betwix frendis in diſputacion
Ther fyl a ſtrif betwix his brethren two
Of whiche that on was clepidy placebo
Placebo ſayde o January brother
To you telle I this tale and to non other
Ful litil nede hady ye my lordy ſo dere
Counſel to aſke of ony that is here
But that ye be on ſo ful of ſapience
That you ne likith for your high prudence
To Weyue fro the Wordy of Salamon
This Wordy ſayde he to vs alderichon
Worke al thingy be counſel thus ſayde he
And thay ſhalt not thou repente the

¶But though Salamon ſpak ſuche a Word
Myn owen dere brother and my lord
So Wyſſely god my ſoule bryngе at reſte
I holde your owen counſel for the beſt
For brother myn of me take this motyf
I haue be a courtman al my lyf
And yet god Woot though y vnWorthy be
I haue ſtonde in ful gret degre
Aboute lordis in ful gret eſtaat
Yet hadde I neuer With non of hem debaat
I neuer contraried hem trewly
I Woot Wel that my lord can more than I
What that he ſeith I holde it ferm & ſtabil
I ſay the ſame or othir thing ſemblable
A ful gret fool is ony counſelour
That ſeruith a lord of high honour
That dar preſume or onys thynke it
That his counſel ſholde paſſe his lordis Wit
Nay lordis be no folis be my fay
Ye haue your ſelf ſpoken here to day
So high ſentence ſo holy and ſo Wel
That I conſente and conferme euerydel
Your Wordis and al your oppinion
Be god ther is noman in this toun
Ne in ytaille coude better haue ſayd
Criſt holdith hym of this ful Wel payd
And trewly it is an high corage
Of ony man that ſtept is in age
To take a yong Wyf for be my fader kyn

Your herte hongith vp on a ioly pyn
Doth now in this mater as you lest
For finally I holde it for the best
Justinus that ay sat ful stille and? playde
He right on this wyse to Placebo sayde
Now brother myn quod he be pacient I pray
Syn ye haue sayd? herkyn what I say
Senek among other wordis wyse
Saith that a man ought hym right wel auyse
To whom he yeuyth his good? or his catel
And? sithnes I ought me auyse right wel
To whom I yeue my good? awey fro me
Wel more I oughte for to auyse me
To whom I yeue my body for alwey
I warne you wel it is no childis play
To take a wyf without auysement
Men muste enquere? this is myn assent
Whether she be wyse sobir or dronkelew
An out goar or othir wey a shrewe
A chidar or a waster of thy good?
Riche or poure or of maners wood?
Al be it so that no man fynde shal
Noon in this worlde that trotteth hool in al
Ne may ne lest suche as men can deuyse
But nauyrtheles it ought ynow suffyse
With ony yf so were that she hadde
Moo good? vertues than vices hadde
And? al this ayed? leyser to enquere
For god? it woot I haue wept ful many a tere

Ful pryuely ſymme I hadde a Wyf
Preyſe Who ſo Wol a Weddidy mannys lyf
Certeyn I fynde it but coſt andy care
Andy obſeruaunces of alle blïſſis bare
Andy yet godi Woot myn neyghebours aboute
Andy namely of Wommen meny a route
Sayn that I haue the muſte ſtedfaſt Wyf
Andy eek the mekeſt one that lerith lyf
But I Woot beſt Where Wringith me my ſho
Ye may for me right as ye like do
Auiſith you ye be a may of age
How that ye entren in to mariage
Andy namely With a yongy Wyf & a feir
Be hym that made Watir erthe andy heir
The yongeſt may that is in al this route
Is beſy ynough to bryngе it aboute
To haue a Wyf alone but truſteth me
Ye ſchul not pleſen hire only yeris thre
This is to ſayn to do hir pleſaunce
A Wyf axeth ful meny ay obſeruaunce
I pray you that ye be not ayl apaydy
Welk quod this January haſt thou saydy
Straw for thy ſenek andy for thy prouerbis
I counte not a paner ful of herbis
Of ſcole termes Wyſer men than thou
As thou haſt herdy hath ſentidy right now
To my purpos Placebo What ſey ye
I ſey it is a curſidy man quod he
That lettith matrimony ſikirly

And with that word they risyn sodenly
And seen assentiden anon that he sholde
Be wedded whan hym list and whan he wolde
The fantesye and the hesy coricusnesse
Fro day to day gan in the soule impresse
Of January aboute his mariage
Many fair shap and meny fair visage
Ther passith throwh his herte nyght be nyght
As who so took a mirour polissheden bright
And set is in a comyn market place
Than sholde he se many a figure pace
Be this mirour and in the same wyse
Gan January in his thought devyse
Of maydens whiche duellidn ther beside
He wiste not where he mighte abyde
For though that on haue beaute in her face
Another stont so in the peplis grace
For her sadnesse and her bemignyte
That of the peppl greet loys hadde she
And som were riche and hadde badde name
But nathelees bethink ernest and game
He atte laste appointedn hym on on
And leet alle othir fro his herte gon
And chose her on his owhn auctorite
For loue is blyndn alday and may not se
And when he was in his bedde brought
He portrepedn in his herte and in his thought
Her fresshe beaute and her age tender
Her myddyl smal & her armys longh & slender

Her Wyse gouernaunce & her gret gentilnesse
Her Wommanly beryng and her sadnesse
And When he Was on her condescendid
Hym thoughte his thought might not be amendid
For When he hym self concluded hadde
Hym thoughte euery other mannys Wit so hadde
That impossible it Were to replye
Ayens his chois this Was his fantesie
His frendis sente he to at his instaunce
And prayde hem to do hym that plesaunce
That hastely they Wolde to hym com
He Wolde abregge her labour al and som
Nedith nomore for hym to go ne ryde
He Was appoynted there he Wolde abyde
Placebo cam and eke his frendis sone
And alderfirst he bad hem alle abone
That noy of hem non argumentis sholde make
Ayens the purpos Which that he hadde y take
Which Was plesaunt to god sayde he
And Verey ground of his prosperite
He sayde ther Was a maiden in the toun
Which that of beaute hadde gret renoun
Al Were it so she Was of smal degre
Suffisith hym her yowthe and her beaute
Whyche mayde he sayde sholde be his Wyf
To lede in ese and holinesse his lif
And thanke god that he myghte haue her al
That no Wight With his blisse partey shal
And prayde hem to labour in this nede

And chapith that he faylith not to spede
For thay he sayde his spirit was at ese
Thay is quod he no thing me may displese
Saue o thing prickith me my conscience
The whiche I wol reherce in your presence
Ye haue herd said ful long sithnis a goo
Thermay noman haue parfit blisfis two
This is to sey in erthe and eek in heuyn
For they he kepte hym fro the symys seuyn
And eke from euerich braunche of that tre
Yet is ther so parfyt prosperite
And so gret ese and lust in mariage
That euer I am agast now in myn age
That I shal lede so mery a lif here
For sithen very heuen is bought so dere
With tribulacion and gret penaunce
How shold I lyue in suche plesaunce
As alle weddid men doon with her wyuys
Come to the blis there crist etern on lyue is
This is my drede as yet my brethren thwey
Assoylith me this question y you prey
Justinus whiche that hatid his foly
Answerd anon right in his iapery
And for he wolde his longe tale abregge
He wolde non auctorite a legge
But sayde sir yf ther be non obstakyl
Othir than this god of his high miracyl
And of his mercy may so for you wirche
That er ye haue your rightis of holy chirche

Ye may repente of Weddid mamys lyf
In Whiche ye saye there is no stryf
And ellis god forbede but yf he sent
A Wedded may grace hym to repente
Wel ofter rather than a sengil may
And therfore the beste rede that J can
Dispeyrith you not but haue in memorye
Parauenture she may be your purgatorye
She may be goddis mene and goddis Whippe
That shal make your soule in to heuyn skippe
Whifter than an arowb doth out of a bowbe
J hope to god her aftir shul ye knowbe
That ther nys noon so greet felicite
In mariage ne memory shal be
But that hit may be your saluacion
So that ye vse it as skil is and reson
The lustis of your Wyf temperatly
And that ye plese her not to amerously
And that ye kepe you eke from other synne
My tale is doon for my Wit is thynne
Beth not agast here of my brother
But lete vs Wade fro this mater to another
The Wyf of bathe yf ye haue vnderstonde
Of mariage Whiche J haue in honde
Declared hath ful Wel in litil space
Fareth nowb Wel god haue you in his grace
And With this he With his brother
Hath take her leue and eche of hem of other
For Whey they sawb it muste nedis be

So they wrought be slighte and by treete
That this mayde whiche that may highte
As hastely as that they myghte
Shal weddid be vnto January
And twolde it were you to longe to tary
If I you tolde of euery escrit and bondy
Be whiche she was seffedy in his londy
Othir forto harke of her riche aray
But finally comyn is the day
That to chirche bothe been they went
Forto receyue the holy sacrement
Forth comyth ỹ preest with stole aboute his neck
And bady hir be like Sarra or Rebek
In wisedom and trouthe of mariage
And sayde his orisons in his vsage
And conwchidy hem & bady godi sholde hym bles
And made al siker ynow with holiues
Thus been they weddid with solempnyte
And at the feste sittith he and she
With other worthy folk vp on the deys
Al ful of ioye and blisse is the paleys
And ful of instrumentis of and vitayl
The moste deynteous of alle Itayl
Beforn hym with instrumentis of suche a soun
That Orpheus of Thebes or Amphioun
Ne made neuer suche a melodye
At euery cours cam loude mynstralsie
That neuyr Joab trompidy forto here
Neyther he Theomodas half so clere

At thekes Whan the cyte Was in doute
Bachus the Wyn hem schenkith al aboute
And Venus loßh vpon euery Wight
For January Was becomen her knyght
And Wolde bothe assayen his corage
In libertee eke as in mariage
And With here fierbrond With her hondy aboute
Daunsith before the bryde al aboute
And certeynly I dar Wel sayn right this
Emenius that godn of Weddyngh is
Salß nauyr in his lif so mery a Weddidy may
Holdy thoß thy pees thou poete Marcian
That Writist vs that ilke Weddyngh mery
Of her philogye andy of hym Mercurye
And of songis that the Musis songh
So smal andy eke the penne andy eke the tonge
For to discriuen of this mariage
Whan tender youthe hade Weddidy stoupingh age
Ther is suche that it may not be Wryte
Assay you self andy than may ye Wyte
If that I lacke or none in this mater
May that sit With so benigne chere
Here to be holden it semedy a fairye
Quene hester lokidy nauyr With suche an ye
Oy assuere so meke a loke as she
I may you not deuyse al her beaute
But thus muche of her beaute telle I may
That she Was lik the bright morow of day
Fulfillydy of beaute andy of plesaunce

This Januarye is rauyſſhidy in atraunce
At euery tyme he lokidy in her face
But in his herte he gan her manace
That might in his armys he Wolde her ſtreyne
Harder than Paris euer dede Eleyne
But natheles yet hadde he gret pyte
That that nyght offende hir muſte he
Andy thoughte allas o tender creature
Nolde Wolde gody ſhe myghte Wel endure
Al my corage it is ſo ſharp andy kene
I am agaſt ſhe maye not ſuſtene
But gody forbede y dede al my myght
Nolde Wolde gody it Were Woye nyght
Andy that the nyght Wolde laſte euermo
I Wolde al this pepyl Were ago
Andy finally he doth al his labour
As he beſt myghte ſauyngy his honour
To haſte hem fro the mete in ſubtil Wyſe
The tyme cam that reſoy Was to ryſe
Andy aftir that men daunſidy andy dranke faſte
Andy ſpicis al aboute the hous they caſte
Andy ful of ioye andy bliſſe is euery man
Alle but a ſquier that highte Dampan
Whiche carf before the knyght meny a day
He Was ſo rauyſſhedy on his lady May
That for the kerry peyne he Was nygh Woody
Almoſt he ſWeltidy & ſWolWnedy there he ſtoody
Whey he ſaW her daunce With a ringy on hir handy
So freſſh ſhe Was andy therto ſo likandy

And to his bed he wente hym hastely
Nomore of hym at this tyme speke I
But there I lete hym wepe ynogh & pleyne
Til fresh may wol relbe on his peyne
O perlous fire that in the bedstraw bredith
O familier foo that his seruice bedith
O seruaunt treytour fals holy helbe
Lyk to the adder sligh & in thy bosom bitrelbe
God schilde vs alle from your acqueyntaunce
O Januarry dronkey in pleysaunce
O mariage se holb that thy Damian
Thyn olben squier & thyn olben hozy man
Entendith foz to do the a felonye
God graunte the thyn harm to aspyé
For in this worlde nys woze pestilence
Than an homly foo alday in thy presence
Parfourmyd hath this day his arke diurne
No lenger may the body of hym seiourne
The oriscnt as in that latitude
Night with his mantel that is so derk & rude
Gan fozto sprede the emyspery aboute
For whiche departith is the lusty route
Fro January with thank on euery side
Hoom to their housis lusty they ryde
There as they do thingis as hem list
And when they se her tyme they go to reste
Sone aftir this hastely this January
Wolde go to bede he wolde no lenger tary
He drynkith Ipocraas clarrey and spernage

Of ſpicis hoot to encrece his corage
And many a lettuary hadde he ful fyn
Suche as the cursid monk dan Constantyn
Hath Writen in his book of coytu
To ete hem alle he Wold no thinch eschau
And thus to his priuy frendis sayd he
For goddis loue as sone as it may be
Leet voyde al this hous in curteys Wyse sone
Men dronken and the trauers dreW anone
This bridy Was brought to bedde as stille as ston
So hastidy January it most be don
And Whan the bedy Was With the preest blisstidy
Out of the chambir hath euery Wight hym dresstidy
And January hath faste in armys take
His fresshe may his paradyse his make
He lulleth here and dy kisseth her ful ofte
With the brustillis of his berdy vnsofte
Lik to the skyn of a fissh sharp as brere
For he Was shaue al neWe in his manere
He rubbith her vpon her tender face
And sayde thus allas I moste trespace
To you my spouse and you gretly offende
Or tyme com that I Wyl doun descende
But nathyles considerith this quod he
Ther is no Workman What euer he be
That may bothe Worche Wel and dy hastely
This Wolde be do at leyser parfitly
It is no force how longe that We pleye
I troW m Wedlok couplidy be We tWeye

And J blissid be the yok that we been ynne
For in our actis we nolde do no synne
A may may do no synne with his wyf
Ne hurte hym self with his owen knyf
Nolde haue we leue to pleye vs be the lawe
Thus labourith he til the day gan dawe
And than he takith a sop in fyn clarre
And vp right on his bedde sittith he
And aftir that he sangh ful lowde and clere
And kissith his wyf & makith wanton chere
He was al coltissh and ful of Pagery
And ful of Jargon as is a fleckid pye
The flak skyn aboute his necke shakith
While that he songh so chauntid he & crakith
But godd woot what may thoughte in her hert
When she hym saw vp sittingh in his shert
In his nyght cappe and with his necke lone
She preysith not his pleyynge worth a bene
Than sayde he thus my restyngh wol J take
Nolde day is come J may no lenger wake
And down he leyde his hedd & slept til pryme
And aftir when that he saw his tyme
Vp risith Januarye and freesh may
She holdith hir chamber til the fourthe day
As vsage is of wyues for the beste
For euery labour sumtyme must haue reste
Or ellis longe may he not endure
This is to say no liuys creature
Be it fisch or bryd best or may

Now wol I speke of this squyer dampan
That langurith for loue as ye shul here
Therfore I speke to hym in this manere
I say o sely Dampan allas
Answere to this demaunde in this caas
How shalt thou thy lady fresssh may
Telle thy woo she wol alwey say nay
Eke yf thow speke she wyl thy wo bewreyn
Ody se thy help I can no bettir seyn
This sik Dampan in venus grete fier
So brennyth that he dieth for desir
For whiche he puttith his lif in auenture
No lenger myghte he in this wyse endure
But priuely a penner gan he borowe
And in a lettir wroot al his sorowe
In maner of a complaynt or a lay
Onto his fresssh and fair lady May
And in a purs of silk hynge it on his shirt
He hath y put and y leyd it at his herte
Thus hath January wedded fresssh may
And the mone as I vnderstond that day
Out of taure was in the Cankir glidyn
So longe hath she in her chambir bidyn
As austom is vnto thyse noblis alle
A bride shal not etyn in the halle
Til dayes four or thre atte leste
Passid be thay let hir go to feste
The ferthe compleet fro noone to noone
Whan that the high masse was doon

Of Wenchis Wolde I here hem ful sore on hondy
When that sor sike Sommethe myghte they stonde
Yet tikelidy I his herte sor that he
Wende that I of hym hadde so gret cheerte
I swoor that al my Walkyngy out be nyght
Was sor to spye Wenchis that he dight
Undir that colour hadde I many a myrthe
For al suche thingy Was gyue Vs in our birthe
Disceyt Weppynge spymynge gody hath yeue
To Women kyndely Whyle that they lyue
Andy thus of o thingy I may auaunte me
Atte ende I hadde the bettir in eche degre
Be sleyghte or force or by sony maner thingy
Or by continuel murmur or gruchinge
Namely a bedde hadde they myschaunce
There Wolde I chide andy do hem no plesaunce
I Wolde no lenger there abedde abyde
If that I felte his arm ouer my side
Til he hadde maady his raunsoy Vnto me
Than Wolde I suffre hym do his nyede
Andy therfore euery may this tale I telle
Wyn Who so may for al is forto selle
With empty hondis men may no hawkis lure
For Wympynge Wolde I as his list endure
Andy make me they a feynedy appetit
Andy yet in bacon hadde y neuer delit
That made me that euer I Wolde hem chyde
For though the Pope hadde sitten hem beside
I Wolde not spare hem at her owen borde

before
S 2
S 1

For be my trouthe I quytte hem euery Word
As so helpe me god omnipotent
Though right nowe I sholde make my testament
I owe hem not o Word but that it is quyt
I broughte it so aboute by my Wit
That they muste yeue it vp al for the beste
Or ellis hadde We neuer be in reste
For though he lokid as Wilde as a lion
Yet sholde he fayle of his conclusion
Than Wolde I say gode leef take kepe
How mekely lokith Wilkyn our sheep
Ye sholde be al pacient and meke
Com ner my spouse lat me ba thy cheke
And haue a swete spicid conscience
Sith ye so spekе of iobbis pacience
Suffrith alwey syn ye can so Wel preche
And but ye do certeyn We Wol you teche
It is fair a man to haue his Wyf in pees
Oon of vs two muste bowe doutlees
And sith a man is euer more resonable
Than a Woman is ye moste be sufferabil
What eylith you to grucche and grone
It is for ye Wolde haue my queynte a lone
Why take it lo haue it euerydeel
Petir I shrewe you but ye loue it Wel
For yf I Wolde selle my bele chose
I coude walke as fressh as a Rose
But I Wol kepe it for your owen toth
Ye be to blame be god I say you soth

In halle sat this January and̄ may
As fresh as is the bright somers day
And̄ so be fyl that this good̄ man
Remembrith hym vpon this dampan
And̄ sayde saynte mary holde may this be
That Dampan entendith not to me
Is he ay sik or holde may this betyde
His squiere Whiche that stood̄ hym besyde
Excusith hym be cause of his sikkesse
Whiche lettith hym to do his besinesse
Non other cause myghte make hym care
That me forthinkith quod this Januare
He is a gentil squyer be my trouthe
Yf that he dyde it were harm and̄ routhe
He is wyse discret honest and̄ secre
As ony man I woot of his degre
And̄ therto manly and̄ seruysable
And̄ forto be a thrifty man right abyl
But aftir mete as sone as euer I may
I wyl my self visite hym and̄ may
To do hym al the comfort that I can
And̄ for that word̄ hym blissith euery man
That of his bounte and̄ of his gentilnesse
He wolde so comforte hym in sikkesse
His squier for it was a gentil dede
Dame quod this January take good̄ hede
That aftir mete ye with your wom̄en alle
Whan ye haue be in chamber out of this halle
That alle ye go to se this dampan

To do hym disport he is a gentilman
And tellith that I wol hym visite
Haue I no thing but restid me a lite
Wold with this word he gan to hym calle
A squier that was marchal of his halle
And tolde hym certeyn things what he wolde
This fresh may hath streyght her wey holde
With alle her women vnto this damyan
Doun be his bedside anon sat she than
Confortyng hym as goodly as she may
This damyan whan he his tyme say
In priuy wyse his purs and eke his bille
In whiche that he writyn hadde al his wille
Hath put in to hir honde withouten more
Saue that he sighed right wonderly sore
And softly to hir right thus sayde he
Mercy and that ye discouer not me
For I am ded yf that this thing be kyd
This bille hath she in her besom hyd
And wente hir wey ye gete nomore of me
Vnto January comyn eke me is she
And on his beddis side sat ful softe
He taketh hir and kissith hir ful ofte
And leyd hym doun to slepe and that anon
She feyned as that she must goone
There as ye woot euery wight most nede
And whan she of this byl hath take kepe
She wente it vnto cloutis and atte laste
In the priuy softly hath she it caste

Who studieth nowe but fayre freſh may
Andy downe be January ſhe lay
That ſlepte tyl the cold hath hym wakidy
Anon he preyde her to ſtrype her nakidy
He wolde of here he ſayde haue ſum pleſaunce
He ſayde her clothis doth hym aumbraunce
Andy ſhe obeyeth be ſhe leef or loth
But leſt that precious folk with me be wroth
Holde that he wroughte y dar you not telle
Or whether he thoughte it paradyſe or helle
But I lete hem woroche in her wyſe
Til euenſongy andy that he muſte aryſe
Were it be deſtyne or be auenture
Were it be influence or be nature
Other in conſtillacion that in ſuche aſtat
The heuyn ſtoody that tyme foztunat
Was fozto put a bil of venus werkis
For al thingy hath tyme as ſayn clerkis
To ony womman fozto gete her loue
I cay not ſey but grete godi aboue
That knowbeth non acte is canſelees
He demyth al foz I wol holde my pees
But ſoth it is holde that this freſſh may
Hath take ſuche impreſſion that day
Of pyte of this ſik may Damyan
That fro hir herte ſhe ne dzyue can
The remembzaunce fozto do hym eſe
Certeyn though whom this thingy diſpleſe
I here recke not I hym aſſure

To loue hym best of ony creature
Thogh he nomore hadde than his shert
And alle was pyte and tender herte
Here may ye here how excellent fraunchyse
In Women is whan they hem nowh auyse
Som tiraunt ther is as ther be many on
That hath an herte as hardy as ony stoon
Whiche wolde haue leet hym sterue in the place
Wel rather than haue graunted hym grace
And hem vrioysey in her cruel pryde
And reckid not to be an homicide
This gentil may fulfilled of al pyte
Right so of her hondy a lettir made she
In whiche she graunted of her verry grace
Ther lackith nought but only day and space
Where that she myghte to his lust suffyse
For it shal be right as he wol deuyse
And whan she saw her tyme vpon a day
To visite this dampan goth this fresh May
And subtilly a lettir down she thriste
She takith hym by the hondy & harde him tWiste
So secretly that noman it Wiste
And kady hym be al hool and forth she Went
To January whan he for her sent
Up risith dampan the nexte morowh
Al passid was his siknes and hisforowh
He kembith hym & proynyth hym & pikith
He doth al that his lady lust and likith
And eke to January he goth as lowe

As euyr dede a dogge for the bolde
He is so pleſaunt to euery man
For craft is al Who so that it can
That euery Wight is fayne to teche hym goodn
Andn fully in his ladies grace he ſtoodn
Thus lete I damyan aboute his nede
Andn in my tale forth I Wol procede
Som clerkis boldey that felicite
Hit ſtont in delit andn therfore he
This nobil January With al his myght
In honeſt Wyſe as longeth to a knyght
Shoop hym to lyue ful deliciouſly
His bolſtingn his aray as honeſtly
To his degre Was made as a kyngis
Amongn other of his honeſt thingis
He hadde a gardyn Wallith al With ſtonn
So feir a gardyn Wot I nowher nonn
For out of doute I verily ſuppoſe
That he that Wroot the romaunce of the Roſe
Ne coude of it the beaute Wel deuyſe
Ne priapus ne myghte not ſuffiſe
Though he be godn of gardyns for to telle
The beaute of the gardyn andn of the Welle
That ſtoodn vnder a laurel alWey grene
Ful ofte tyme kyngn pluto andn his quene
Proſerpina andn al her feyrye
Diſporten hem andn make melodye
Aboute that Welle andn daunſedn as men tolde
This nobyl knyght this January the olde

Suche deynte hath to Walkyn and to pleye
That he Wol suffre no Wight to bere the key
Saue he hym self of the smale Wiket
He baar alWey of siluer a cliket
With the Whiche Whan he list vnshit
And Whan he Wolde paye his Wyf his dette
In somer seson thyder Wolde he go
And May his Wyf and no Wight but they two
Of thingis that Were not do a bedde
They in the gardeyn parfourmed haue & sped
And in this Wyse meny a mery day
Lyuen this January and fresh may
But Wordly ioye may not alWay endure
To January ne no Wordly creature
O sodeyn hap o fortune Variable
Lik vnto the scorpioun vnstabil
That flaterst With thy hed Whyen thou Wilt stinge
Thy tayl is deth throuh thyn enuenymynge
O brotel ioye o thou swete poysoun queynt
O thou monster that subtilly canst peynt
Thy gestis vnder hele of stedfastnesse
That thou disceyuest both more and lesse
Why hast thou January thus disceyued
And haddist hym for thy frend resceyued
And nouh thou hast beraft hym both his yen
For sorouh of Whiche he desirith dien
Alas this January that is so free
Amyd his lust and his prosperite
Is nouh Woyen blynde and al sodenly

His deth therfore desiryth he bttirly
And therwith all a feer of Jelosie
Lest that his wyf shal falle in som foly
So brent his herte that he wolde fayn
That som may bothe hym & here hadn sleyn
For neuer after his deth ne his lyf
Ne wolde he that she were loue ne wyf
But euer lyue in clothis blake
Sool as the turtyl that hath lost his make
But atte laste aftir amonthe or tweye
His sorwe gan to swage as I you sey
For he wiste it may non other be
He pacientlý took his aduersite
Saue out of doute may he not forgon
That he ne was Jelous euermore in on
Whiche ielousye was so outrageous
That neyther in halle ne in other hous
He nolde suffre here for to ryde ne go
Ne in non other place neuyr the mo
But yf that he hadn hondn on here alwey
For whiche ful ofte wepith fresh may
That louyth Damyan so benignely
That she muste othir deye sodenly
Or ellis she muste haue hym atte leste
She waytith when her herte wolde breste
Up on that òthir side this Damyan
Be comyn is the sorwfullist man
That euer was for neyther nyght ne day
Ne myghte he speke a word with fresh may

As of his purpose of none ſuche mater
But yf that January muſte it here
That hadde ay hondy ay ere ouyr mo
Andy nathelees be Writingy to andy fro
Andy priuy ſignys Wiſte he What ſhe ment
Andy ſhe knelb of the ſame his entent
O January What myght the auaylle
Though thou mightiſt ſe as fer as ſhip doth ſayl
For as goody blyndy is diſceyuedy to be
As to be diſceyuedy Whan amay may ſe
Lo argus Whiche that hadde ay hundridy yey
For al that euer he coude poure or pryey
Yet Was he blent andy I Woot ſo be mo
That Wenyn that it is nothingy ſo
Paſſe ouyr is ay eſe I ſey nomore
This freſſh may of Whiche I ſpak of yore
In Warmy Wey hath printidy this cliket
That January baar of the ſmale Wiket
Be Whiche vnto this gardyn ofte he Went
Andy damyan that knelb here entent
The cliket countirfetidy priuely
Ther is nomore to ſey but haſtely
Som Wonder be this cliket ſhal be tide
Whiche ye ſhal here yf ye Wil abyde
O nobyl Ouyde ſoth ſayſt thou gody Woot
What ſleighte it is though it be longe e hoot
That he nyl fynde it vp m ſomy maniere
By pyramus andy Tyſbe may men here
Though they Were kept ſtreyt longe ouyr al

They been accordid wolbnyngh thorou a wal
Ther is non coude haue founde ſuche a ſleighte
But nolb to purpos or that dayes .viij.
Were paſſid of the moneth of Juyl be fyl
That January hath caught ſo greet a wyl
Thorough eggyngh of his wyf hym forto pleye
In his gardyn & no wight but they tweye
That in a morolb vnto this may ſaidh he
Riſe vp my wyf my loue my lady fre
The turtelis voys I herde my ſpouſe ſwete
The wynter is goon with alle his raynes wete
Com forth with thyn yen columbyne
Nolb fayrer been thy breſtis than is wyne
The gardyn is cloſid al aboute
Com forth my ſwete ſpouſe out of doute
Tholb haſt me wouridh in myn herte wyf
No ſpot in the ſalb I in al my lyf
Com forth and leet vs take our diſport
I care for the my wyf & for my comfort
Suche olde lelbe wordis vſid he
On Damyan a ſigne made ſhe
That he ſholde go beforn with his cliket
This Damyan hath openedh the wyket
And in he ſtert and ſat in ſuche manere
That no wight myght it ſe ne here
And ſtille he ſat vnder abuſh anone
This January ſo blyndh is as a ſtone
With may in his hondh and no wight mo
In to this freſh gardyn is he go

And clappid to the Wiket sodenly
Nowe Wyf quod he here keep but ye and I
That art the creature that I best loue
For by that lordy that sit vs alle aboue
I hade leuyr right nowe dye on a knyf
Than the offendey myn owen dere Wyf
For goddis sake think how y the chees
Not for ouetyse ne other goody doutlees
But only for the loue I hade to the
And though that y be oldy e may not se
Be to me trewe and I wol telle the Why
Certis thre thingis sholde ye Wynne ther by
First loue of crist and to your self honour
And al myn heritage both towy and tour
I yeue it yowe makith chartres as yowe list
This shal be do to morowe or the sonne rist
So Wisly gody my soule bryngе to blis
And I pray you of couenaunt ye me kis
And though I be ielous Wite me nought
Ye be so depe pryntid in my thought
That Whan I consider your beaute
And therwith al the vnlikelihede of me
I may not certis though I sholde dy
Forbere to keep out of your company
For keepy loue this is Withouten doute
Nowe kis me Wyf and lete vs Rome aboute
This fressh may Whan she the Wordis herde
Benignely to January answerde
But first e forward she began to Wepe

I haue quod she a soule forto kepe
As wel as ye and also myn honour
And of my wyfhode that tender flour
Whiche that I haue assured in your hond
Whan that the preest to you my body bond
Wherfore I wol answere in this manere
With the leue of you my lord so dere
I praye to god that yf ye euer se that day
That I ne sterue as soule as wommay may
If euer I do to my kyn that shame
Or ellis I empeyre so my name
That I be fals and yf I do that lak
To strype me and put me in a sak
And in the nexte ryuer do me drenche
I am a gentil wommay and no wenche
Why speke ye thus but men be euer vntrewe
And wommen haue repreef of you ay newe
Ye can non other comynycacion I leue
But speke to vs of vntrust & vs repreue
And with that word she saw where Damyan
Sat in a bush and knele he began
And with hir fyngris signes made she
That Damyan shold clymbe vp on a tre
That charged was with fruyt & vp he went
For verily he knewe al her entent
And euery signe that she coude make
Wel bet than January her owen make
For in a lettre she hade told hym al
Of this matere how he wirche shal

And thus I lete hym sitte in the pury
And January With May yongh and mery
BRight was the day & blew the firmament
Phebus of goldy / doun his bemys hath sent
To gladen euery flour With his warmnesse
He Was that tyme in geminis as y gesse
But litil fro his declinacion
And cansere of Jouis exaltacion
And so it fill that in a bright morow tide
That in the gardy on the ferthir side
Pluto that is kyng of the fairye
And many a lady in his companye
Folowing his Wyf the quene Proserpina
Whiche that hir rauysshed out of pina
Whilis that she gadrid flouris in a mede
In claudian ye may the stories rede
How in his grisly carte he her fette
This kyng of feyre adoun hym sette
Vp on a benche of turues fair and grene
And right anone sayde he thus to his quene
My Wyf quod he ther may no Wight say nay
The experience prouith it euery day
The treson Whiche that Women to do mey
Ten hundrid thousandy tellyn I can
Ensamples and of your vntrouth & brotilnes
O Salamon richest of alle riches
Fulfilled of sapience and of Wordly glorye
Wel Worthy be thy Wordis in memory
To euery Wight that Wit and reson can

Thus preysith he yet the bounte of man
Among a thousandy men yet fondy I one
But of alle wymmen fondy he neuyr non
Thus said ỹ kyng ỹ so knowith your wickidnes
And also Jhesus Sirak as I gesse
Ne spekith of you but seldyn reuerence
A wylde fyre and a corupt pestilence
So falle on your bodies yet to nyght
Ne se ye not this honourable knyght
Be cause allas that he is blindy and oldy
His olbey man shal make hym Cokeoldy
Lo where he sit the lechour in the tre
Now wol I graunte of my mageste
Unto this olde blynde worthy knyght
That he shal haue ayen his sight
When that his wyf wolde do hym vilonye
Than shal he knowe al her harlotry
Bothe in repreef of here and other mo
Ye shal quod preserpina and wol ye so
Now be my modris siris soule I swere
That she shal redily excusen her
And alle wommen after for her sake
Though they be in ony gilt y take
With face boldy they shal hem self excuse
And bere hem doun that wolde hem accuse
For lak of answer non of hem shul dyen
Al hadde he seen a thing with bothe his yen
Yet shul we so visage it hardely
And wepe and swere and chyde subtilly

That ye shul be as lewdy as fele gees
That reckith not of here auctorites
I Woot wel this though this Salamon
Fondy of bs Women mo foolis than on
But though he ne fondy no goody Woman
I pray you take the sentence of the man
He ment thus that in souereyn bounte
Nys non but gody that sittith in tryynte
Ey for very gody that nys but on
What make ye so mucke of Salamon
What though he made a tempyl goddis hous
What though he were riche andy glorious
So made he eke a tempyl of false goddis
Holw myghte he do a thmgy that more hady is
Parde as fayre as ye his name enplastre
He was a lechour andy eke an ydolastre
Andy in his elde he verry gody forsook
Andy yf gody ne hade as saith the book
Asparydy for his fadris sake he sholde
Haue lost his regne rathir than he wolde
I yeue right nought of al the felonye
That he of Women writith a butter flye
I am a Woman nedis y muste speke
Or ellis swelle til myn herte to breke
For sithen ye sey that we be Jangeleresses
As euer hool I moot broke my tresses
I shal not spare nolw for no curtesie
To speke hym harm that wolde bs felonye
Dame quod this Pluto be no lenger wroth

I yeue it vp but ſith I ſweer myn oth
That I wyl graunte hym his ſighte agen
My wordy ſhal ſtonde I ſay you certeyn
I am a kyngy it ſit me not to lye
Andy I a quene quod ſhe of the feirye
Her anſwer ſhal ſhe haue I vndertake
Lete vs nomo wordis here of make
For ſoth I wol you no lenger tary
Now lete vs turne ayen to January
That in the gardyn with his freſh may
Syngith ful merier than the popingeay
Now loue y beſt andy ſhal andy other noy
So longe aboute the aleyys is he goon
Tyl he was come ayens that pery
Where as this dampan ſittith ful mery
Ay high among the freſh leuys greene
This freſh may that is ſo bright andy ſhene
Gan forto ſighe andy ſayde allas my ſyde
Now ſire quod ſhe for aught that may betyde
I muſte haue of the peris that I ſe
Or y muſte dye ſo ſore longith me
To ete of the ſmale peris greene
Help for hir loue that is of heuen quene
I telle you wel a wommay in my plit
May haue in fruyt ſo gret an appetit
That ſhe may dien but ſhe of it haue
Allas quod he that I ne hadde here a knaue
That coude clymbe allas quod he
That I am blindy ye ſire no force quod ſhe

But wolde ye vouchesauf for goddis sake
The pery with yme your armys forto take
For wel I woot that ye mystruste me
Than sholde I clymbe wel ynough quod she
So I my feet myght sette vp on your bak
Certis quod he therof shal be no lak
Mighte I you helpyn with myn herte blody
He stoupith adown and on his bak she stody
And caughte hir be a twiste and vp she goth
Ladyes I pray you be not wroth
I can not glose I am a rude man
And sodenly anon this damyan
Gan pulle vp the smok & in he through
A greet tente a thrifty and a long
She sayde it was the merieste fytte
That euer in her lif she was at yet
My lordis tente seruith me nothing thus
He foldith twifolde be swete Jhesus
He may not swynue worth a leek
And yet he is ful gentil and ful meek
This is leuyr to me than an eynsong
And whan that Pluto saw that wrong
To January yaf ayeen his sighte
And made hym se as wel as euyr he mighte
And whan that he hadde caught his sighte agayn
Ne was ther noman of thing so fayn
But on his wyf his thought was euyr mo
Vp to the tre he cast his yen two
And saw how damyan his wyf hath dressid

In ſuche maneꝛe as it may not be expꝛeſſid
But yf I Wolde ſpeke vnaꝛteiſly
And vp he yaf a woꝛinge and a cry
As doth the moder When the childꝛ ſhal dy
Out help allas haWb he gan cry
Foꝛ ſoꝛWb almoſt he gan to dy
That his Wyf Was ſWyuyd in the pery
O ſtronge lady hoꝛe What doſt thoW
And ſhe anſWeꝛde ſiꝛe What eylith yoW
Haue pacience and ꝛeſon in youꝛ mynde
I haue yoW holpyn on bothe youꝛ yen blinde
Vp peril of my ſoule y ſhal not lyen
As me Was taught to hele With youꝛ yen
Was no thing ꝛet to make you to ſe
Than ſoꝛto ſtꝛogil With amay in a tꝛe
Goodꝛ Woot y dede it in ful goodꝛ entent
Stꝛogil quod he ye algate in it Went
Stif and woundꝛ as ony belle
It Was no Wonder though heꝛ lely ſWelle
The ſmok on his bꝛeſt lay ſo theche
And euer me thought he poyntidꝛ on the bꝛeche
Godꝛ you yaue bothe a ſhamys deth to dyen
He dide the ſo I ſalW it With myn yen
And ellis I hangidꝛ be the hals
Than is quod ſhe my medicine fals
Foꝛ ceꝛteinly yf ye myght ſe
Ye Wolde not ſey thyſe Woꝛdes to me
Ye haue ſom glymſinge andꝛ no paꝛfit ſight
I ſe quod he as Wel as euer I myght

Thankid̄y he gody with hothe myn yen two
And̄y he my trowthe me thoughte he didy̆so
Ye may deme as ye list gode sere quod she
This thank haue I for I made yow se
Allas quod she that euyr I was so kynde
Now dame quod he lat al passe out of mynde
Comdowy my leef and̄y yf I haue myssayde
Gody helpe me so as y am euyl apayd̄y
But he my fader soule I wente haue seyn
How that this Damyan hadde by the leyn
And̄y that thy smok he leyde vp on thy breste
Ye sire quod she ye may wene as ye list
But sire qd̄y she a man that wakith of his sleep
He may not so sodenly wel take keep
Vp on a thinḡy ne se it so parfitly
Tyl that he be wel adawed̄y verily
Right so a man that longe blynd̄y hath be
Ne may not sodenly so sone wel se
First whey his sighte is new comyn agayn
As he that hath a day or tweyne y seyn
Til that your sighte y fatelid̄y be a whyle
Ther may ful many a sighte yow begile
Welwar I pray yow for be kuyn kynḡy
Ful meny a man wenyth to se a thinḡy
And̄y yet it is al another than it semyth
He that mysconceyueth ofte mys demyth
And̄y with that word̄y she lepte fro the tre
This January who is glad̄y but he
He kisseth her and̄y clippith hir ful ofte

And on her Wombe he strikith her ful softe
And to the Paleys hoom he hath her lad
Now gode men I pray you be mery and glad
Thus endith here my tale of January
God blisse vs alle and his moder Mary
¶ Here endith the Marchantis tale. And
begynneth the prologh of the Wyf of Bathe.
Experience though non auctorite
Were in this Worlde is right ynow for me
To speke of Woo that is in mariage
But lordis syn y. vij. Wynter Was of age
Thankid be god that is eternal alyue
Husbondis at the chirche dore haue I had fyue
If I so often myghte haue Weddid be
And alle Were Worthy men in here degre
But onys me Was told not longe a go I Wys
That crist Wente neuyr but onys
To Weddynge in the Cane of galilee
That be the same ensaumpyl taughte he me
That I Weddid sholde be but onys
Lo Whiche a sharp Word for the nonys
Besid a Welle Jhesus god and man
Spak in repreef of the samaritan
Thow hast had. v. husbondis sayd he
And that ilke man that now hath the
Is not thy husbond thus he sayde certeyn
What he mente therby I can not sayn
But that I aske Why that the. v. man
Was not husbond to the samaritan

Holw many myghte he haue in mariage
But herde y neuer tellyn in myn age
Of this noumbre fery diffinicion
Men molde deme and glose vp a doun
Wel J woot expresse withoutyn lye
That godd bad vs wexe and multiplye
That gentil text can J wel vnderstonde
For wel y woot that myn husbonde
Shulde leue fader and moder and take to me
But of noumbre no mencion made he
Of bigamye or of Octogamye
Why shulde men speke of it felonye
Lo here the wyse kyng Salamon
J trowe he hadde wyues mo than on
As wolde to godd it leefful were to me
To haue refresshing half so ofte as he
Whiche a yefte of godd had he for al his wyuys
Noman hath suche that now on lyue is
Godd woot this nobyl kyng as to my witte
The firste nyght hadde meny a mery fytte
With eche of hem so wel was hym on lyue
Blissid be godd for J haue had fyue
Of whiche J haue pikid out of the beste
Bothe of her nethir ende and eke her cheste
Diuers scolis makith diuers clerkis
And diuers practik in many sondry werkis
Makith the parfiter may to be sikerly
Of fyue husbondis scolinge am J
Welcome the sixte whey that euer he shal

I wol hym not forsake no thyng at al
Whey myn husbond is fro the worlde I goy
Som cristen man shal wedden me anoy
For the apostel sayth that I am fre
To wedde a goddis half where it likith me
He sayth to be weddid it is no synne
Bettir it is to be weddid than to blynne
What reckith me though men say vilonye
Of shrewde lameth and of his bigamye
I woot abraham was a ful holy man
And eke Jacob as fer as euer I here can
And eche of them hadde mo wyuys than two
And meny another man also
Where can ye say in ony manere age
That euer god defendith mariage
Be expresse wordis I pray you tel me
Or where comandith he euyr virginite
I woot as wel as ye it is no drede
The apostil when he spak of maydenhede
He sayde that ther of precept had he noon
Men may counsel a woman to be oon
But counsel is no maner cōmandement
He puttith that in our Jugement
For hadde god comanded maydenhede
Than had he dampned wedding out of drede
And certis yf ther were no seed I solde
Virginite what sholde therof growe
Paule durste not comaunde atte leste
A thyng whiche his maister yaf non heste

The dart is set vp oy Virgínite
Cast who so may who vemyth best let se
But this Wordy is not take of euery Wight
But there as gody Wol yeue it of his myght
I Woot Wel the apostel Was amayde
But natheles though he Wroot andy sayde
He Wolde Wel euery Wight Were as he
Al is but counsel to Virgínite
Andy forto be a Wyf he yaf me leue
Of indulgence so it be not to repreue
To Wedde me yf that my make dye
Withoute excepcíoun of bigamye
Al Were it goody no Woman forto tolloche
He mente in his body or in his colloche
For paril it is fyre andy coll to assembil
Ye knolle What this ensample may resemble
This is al andy som he heldy Virgínite
More parfit than Weddíngy in freelte
Freelte clepe I but yf he or she
Wolde kepyn her lyf in chastite
I graunte it Weel I haue noy enuy
Though maydenhede preferre bigamy
It likith hem to be cleeny in body andy goost
Of myn estate I Wyl make no bost
Ful Wel I knolle a lordy in his husholdy
Hath meny a vessel of siluer andy of goldy
Som keen of tre andy doy her lordy seruise
Gody clepith to hym folk in sondry Wyse
Andy eche hath of gody a proper yefte

Eche may as hym liſte to chiſte
Virginite is a greet perfection
And continence eek With deuocion
But criſt that is of perfection the Welle
Bad not euery Wight he ſholde go ſelle
Al that he hath and yeue it to the poure
And in ſuche Wyſe ſoloW hym and his lore
He ſpak to hem that Wil lyue parfitly
And lordmgis be your leue that am not I
I Wol bestoWe the flour of al myn age
In the actis & in the fruyt of mariage
Tel me alſo to What concluſion
Were membris maad of generacion
And of ſo parfit Wyſe a Wight yWrought
Truſt me Wel they be not made for nought
Gloſe Who ſo Wol and ſey vp an doWn
They Were made for purgacion
Of vryne and of other thingis ſmale
Was eke to knoWe a female from a male
And for no cauſe ellis ſay ye no
The experience Woot Wel it is not ſo
So that ye clerkis With me be not Wroth
I ſay thus they be made for both
That is to ſay bothe for office and for eſe
Of engendrure there We gon not diſpleſe
Why ſhulde not ellis men in bokis ſette
That man ſhal yelde to his Wyf her dette
Where With ſholde he make his payement
If he ne vſid his ſely inſtrument

They were they maad vpon a creature
To purge hym and eke to engendrure
But I say not this as y you tolde
That euery wight that hath suche harneis is holde
To go and vse hem in engendrure
Than sholde men of chastite take no cure
Crist was a mayde and shapyn as a man
And many an holy saynt sith the worlde began
Yet liuyd they euer in parfit chastite
But I nyl enuye non virginite
Eeet hem with bredy of puredy whete sesedy
And lete vs vsen hoot barly bredy
And yet with barly bredy men telle can
Our lordy Jhesus refressidy many a man
In swhich astat as godi hath clepidy vs
I wyl pseuere I am not precious
In wyf hoody wyl I vse myn instrument
As frely as my maker hath it sent
If I be daungerous godi yeue me sorow
Whether he wyl at eue or a morow
Whan that hym list com forth and pay his dette
An husbondy wol y haue y wol not lette
That shal be bothe my detour and my thral
And I his tribulacion with al
Duringe the whyle that I am his wyf
The power wol I haue during al my lif
Both of his propir body and nat he
Right thus the apostel tolde it me
And bad our husbondis forto loue vs weel

Al this sentence me liketh euerydel
Vp stert the pardoner and that anon
Nowe dame quod he be god and be saint John
Ye be an nobyl prechour in this caas
I was aboute to wedde a wyf alas
What shold I bye it my self so dere
Yet hadde y leuer wedde no wyf this yere
Abyde quod she my tale is not begonne
Nay thou shalt drynke of another tonne
Or that I go shal sauour worse than ale
And when I haue told forth my tale
Of tribulacion that is in mariage
Of whiche I am expert in al myn age
This is to sey my self haue be the whippe
Than mayst thou chese whither thou wilt sippe
Of that tonne that y shal broche
Be ware of it or thow to nygh approche
For I shal telle ensamplis mo than ten
Who so wol not be ware be othir men
By hym shal othir men corrected be
Thyse same wordis writith ptholome
Redy in his almegeste and take it there
Dame I wyl pray you yf your wyl were
Sayde this pardoner as ye began
Tel forth your tale spare for noman
And teche vs yonge men of your practike
Gladly quod she sith it may you like
But that y pray to al this companye
Yf that y speke after my fantasye

As take not a greef of that J say
For myn entent is but forto play
Now feris than Wol y telle you forth my tale
As euyr J muste drynke Wyne or ale
J shal say soth thyse husbondis that J hadde
Thre of hem Were goode and two Were badde
Ommethe myghte they holde the statute
In Whiche they Were bonden vnto me
Ye Woot Weel What J mene parde
As helpe me gody y laughe What thet J thynke
How petously a nyght y made hem to swynke
And be my faith J yaf of hem no stooze
They hadde me yaue her lond and her tresor
Me nedith not to do hem lenger diligence
To Wynne her loue or do hem reuerence
They louedy me so Wel be gody aboue
That J ne tolde no deynte of her loue
A Wyse Woman Wyl bysy hir euyr in one
To gete her loue there she hath noon
But sith J hadde hem holly in myn hondy
And aftir they hadde yaue me here londy
What sholde y take kepe hem forto plese
But yf it Were for my profit or for myn ease
J heldy hem so a Werke be my fey
That many a nyght they songy Wel a Wey
The bacon Was fet for hem J trowe
That som may hath in essey at onmowe
J gouernedy hem so Wel aftir my lawe
That eche of hem ful blesful Was and fawe

To bryngе me ſeire thingis fro the feyre
They were ful feyn whan I ſpak to hem faire
For godʒ it woot I chidde hem ſpitouſly
Nowb herke how I baar me properly
Ye wyſe wyues that can vnderſtonde
Thus ſholde ye ſpekyn & bere hem an honde
For half ſo boldly can ther noman
Where andʒ lye as a woman can
I ſay not this but ye wyues that been wyſe
But yf it be whan they hem mys auyſe
A wyf yf that ſhe can her goodʒ
Shal bere hym on hondʒ the cowb is woodʒ
Andʒ take witneſſe of her owen mayde
Of here aſſent but herkenyth how I ſayde
Sire olde kaynardʒ is this thyn aray
Why is myn neyghebours wyf ſo gay
She is honouryth where euer ſhe goth
I ſitte at hoom andʒ haue no thryfty cloth
What doſt thow at myn neyghebours hous
Is ſhe ſo fair art thou ſo amerous
What rowneſt thou with a mayde benedicite
Sire olde lechour let thy Japis be
Andʒ yf that I haue a goſſib or a frendʒ
With outyn gilt thou chidiſt as a fendʒ
If that thou walkiſt hoom to her hous
Thou comyſt hoom as dronke as a mous
Thou prechiſt on thy benche with eyen preef
Thou ſaiſt to me it is a gret myſchief
To wedde a poure woman for coſtage

And yf she be high and of riche parage
Thow saist that it is a very turmentry
To suffre hir pryde and hir malencoly
And yf she be fair thow very knaue
Thow saist that euery harlot wol her haue
She may no whyle in chastite abyde
That is assayled on euery syde
Thow sayst som folk desire hs for riches
Some for our shap & some for our fairnes
And some for she can othir singe or daunce
And some for gentilnes or for daliaunce
Som for her hondis and legges smale
Thus goth al to the deuyl be thy tale
Thow sayst men may kepe a castel wal
It may so longe assayled be ouyr al
And yf she be foul thou sayst that she
Coueytith euery man that she may se
For as a spaynel she wol on hym lepe
Til she may fynde som man her to chepe
Ne non so grey goos goth ther in the lake
As sayst thow be wyl without her make
And sayst it is an hardy thing for to welde
A thing that no man wol his thank helde
Thus sayst thou lorel whan thou gost to bedde
And that no wyse man nedith for to wedde
Ne noman that entendith vnto heuyn
With wilde thundir dynt and fyre leuyn
I pray god moot thyn necke al to breke
Tho sayst a droppyng hous and eek smeke

And chidynge wyuys makeh men to flee
Out of her hollis atonys a benedicite
What eyleth suche an old man forto chyde
Thou sayst we wyuys wyl our vices hyde
Til we be fast & than we wil hem shewe
Wel may that be a prouerbe of a shrewe
Thou sayst that men assis hors and houndis
They been assayd of dyuers stoundis
Basyns lauours or that men hem bye
Spoons stolis and alle other husbondrye
And so be pottis clothis and aray
But folk of wyuys make non assay
Til they be wedded to old dotard shrewis
And than sayst thou wel our vices shewis
Thou sayst also that it displesith me
But yf thou wolt preyse my beaute
And but thou poure alday in my face
And clepe me fayre dame in euery place
And but thou make a feste that ilke day
That y was borin and me fresh and gay
And but thou do me norisch and honoure
And to my chamber with in my boure
And to my fadris folk and myn alies
Thus sayst thou olde chorle ful of lyes
And also for that our prentice Jankyn
For his crisp heris shynynge as gold fyn
And for he squiereth me bothe vp and doun
Yet hast thou caught a fals suspecion
I wyl hym not though thou were ded to morow

But tel me this Why hidist thou With sorow
The keyes of thy cheste awey fro me
As wel it is my good as thyn parde
What wenyst thou to make an idiot of our dame
Now be that lord that clepid is saint Jame
Thou shalt not bothe though thou were wood
Be maister of my body and of my good
That oy thou shalt forgo magre thyn yen
What nedith it of me to enquere or pryen
I trow thou woldist lokke me in thy cheste
Thou sholdist say gode wyf go where ye liste
Take your disport I wol leue no talis
I knowe you for a trewe wyf dame alis
We loue noman that takith kepe or charge
Where that we wol go and be at our large
Of alle maner men blessid mote he be
The wyse Astrologien dan Protholome
That saith right thus in his almegeste
Of alle men his wisdom it is the beste
That reckith not who hath the world in honde
By this prouerbe thou shalt vnderstonde
Haue ye ynough What dar ye recke or care
How merily that other folkis fare
For certis olde dotardis be your leue
Ye shal haue queynte ynough at eue
Be thow neuer Wroth for myn instrument
Though it be somtyme to a good-felaw lent
For he is to gret an nygard that wyl werne
A man to lighte a candel at his lanterne

This leaf misplaced it should be 15 leaves further on 137

He ſchal haue neuer the laſſe ſight parde
Haue thou ynough thou dar not pleyne the
Thou ſayſt alſo yf that we make vs gay
With clothíng or with precious aray
That it is peril of our chaſtite
And with ſorwe thou most enforcen the
And ſay thyſe wordis ín the Apoſtelis name
In habit made with chaſtite and ſhame
Ye women ſchul appareyle you quod he
And nat ín treſſid heer and riche perre
As peerlis ne with goldy ne clothis riche
Aſtir thy thought ne aſtir thy Rubriche
I wol not worche as moche as a gnat
Thou ſayſt thus I walke out as a cat
But who ſo wol ſenge the cattis ſkyn
Thay wyl the cat duelle ín his yn
And yf the cattis ſkyn be ſlight and gay
She wol not duelle ín his hous half aday
But forth she wol or ony day be walwed
To ſhewe her ſkyn and go a catirwalwed
This is to ſay yf I begay ſir ſhrewe
I wol renne out my borel forto ſhewe
Sire olde fool What helpith the to eſpien
Though thou pleye argus with his hundrid yen
To be my warde worps as he may beſt
In feith he ſhal not kepe me but me leſt
Yet coude I make his berdy ſo mote I the
Thou ſayſt eek that ther be thíngis thre
The whiche thíngis troubley al the erthe

And that no Wight may endure the ferthe
O leue sire shrewe Jhesus short thy lif
Yet prechist thow and saist ay hateful Wyf
Rekenyd is for oy of thyse myschaunsis
Bey ther now none othir resemblaunsis
That may be like your parablis vnto
But yf a sely Wyf be oy of tho
Thow likneste eke a Womannys loue to helle
To hareyn lond there Watir may not dwelle
Thow likneste vs eek also to Wilde fire
The more it brennyth the more it hath desire
To consume euery thing that brent Wold be
Thow sayst right as Wormys shendyn a tre
Right so a Wyf destroieth her husbonde
This knowen they that trey to Wyuys bonde
Lordingis right thus as ye haue vnderstonde
Bare y stifly myn olde husbondis oy bonde
And of other thinges both more and lesse
And al Was fals but as J took Witnesse
Of Jankyn our child and of myn nece also
O lord the pyne J dede hem and the Woo
Ful giltlees ofte be goddis sWete pyne
For as ay hors J coude both byte and Whyne
J coude pleyne though J Were in the gilt
Or ellis J hadde ofte tymes be spilt
Who so comyth first to the mylle first he grynt
J pleyned first so Were our Werrys stynt
They Were ful glad for to excuse hem blyue
Of thing Whiche they neuer agilt by her lyue

Suche maner wordis hadde we oy honde
Nowe wol I speke of my firste husbonde
My firste husbond was a Reuelour
Thys is to say he hadde a paramour
And I was yonge and ful of ragery
Stoborn & strong and pliant as a pie
Welcoude he daunce and harpe smale
And synge as mery as ony nychtyngale
Whey I hadde dronke a draughte of swete wyn
Metnilms the foule chorle the swyne
That with a staf bereafte his wif haz lif
For she drank wyne and I hadde be his wif
He sholde not haue daunted me fro drinke
And after wyne ou venus muste I thinke
For also sikir as cold engendrith hail
A licorous monith muste haue a licorons tail
In wynolent pfone is no defence
This knowen lechouzs be experience
But lord crist whan it remembrith me
Upon my youthe and on my Jolite
It tiklith so vpon my herte rote
Unto thysday it doth my herte bote
That I haue had my worlde & my tyme
But age allas that al wol envenyme
Hath me bereft my beaute & my pith
Let go farewel the deuil go perwith
The flouz is go ther is nomore to telle
The bren as I best may nowe muste I selle
Nowe to beright mery nowe wil I fonde

Now wyl I telle of my fourthe husbonde
I Sey he hadde in his herte a gret despyte
That I ony other hadde delyt
But he was quyt be god and be seynt Jose
I made hym of the same wode a croce
Nat of my body in no foul manere
That certenly I made folk suche chere
That in his oldey grece I made hym frye
For angir and for verry Jelousye
Be god in erthe I was his verry purgatory
For whiche I hope his soule be in glorye
For god it woot he sat ful ofte and songe
Whan that his sho bitterly hym wronge
Ther was no wight saue god and he that wyste
In many wyse how sore I did hym twiste
He deyde whan I com fro Jherusalem
And lith I grauen vnder the rode beem
Al is not his toumbe so curius
As was the sepulcre of hym Darius
Which that appelles wroughte subtilly
It is but wast to birye hym preciously
Let hym fare wel god yeue his soule goode reste
He is now in his grane and leyd in his cheste
Now of my fyfthe husbonde wol I telle
God lete her soulis neuer come in helle
And yet was the fyfthe to me the moste shrewe
That fele I on my ribbis reewe by rewe
And euer shal vnto myn endyng day
But in our bed he was ful fresh and gay

And therwith al also he coude so wel glose
That though he hadde lete me on euery loon
He coude wynne my loue ayeen anoon
I trowe I loued hym best for that he
Was of his loue so daungerous vnto me
We wymmen haue yf that I shal not lye
In this mater a queynte fantesye
Wayte what thyng we may not lightly haue
Ther after wil we crye alday and craue
Forbede vs thyng and that desiren we
Preese on vs and than wil we fle
With daunger bitter we al our chaffare
Greet prees at market makith dere ware
And to greet cheep is holden a febyl pryce
This knoweth euery woman that is wyse
My fyfthe husbonde god his soule blesse
Which I took for loue and no richesse
He sumtyme was a clerk of Oxenforde
And hadde left scole and went at hoom to borde
With my gossib tho dwellynge in our toun
God haue her soule her name was alisoun
She knew my herte and eek my pryuyte
Better than our parisch preest so mot I the
To hire bewreyed I my counsel al
For hadde myn husbond pissed ayens a wal
Or do a thyng that he sholde haue lost his lyff
To her and also to another wyff
Whan that he wolde haue my bele chose
And to my Nece whiche that I loued weel

I Wolde haue tolde his counsel euerydell
And so I dide ful ofte gode it Woot
That made his face ful ofte reede and hoot
For verry shame and blamede hym self that he
Hadde tolde to me so grete a priuyte
And so be fyl that onys in a lente
So ofte tyme I to my gossib Wente
For euer I louede to be gay allebay
And forto Walke in March aperyl and May
Fro hous to hous to here sondry talis
That Jankyn clerk and my gossib dame alis
And I my self in to the feldis Wente
My husbonde Was at londoun al that lent
I hadde the bettir leyser forto pleye
And forto se and eke forto be seye
Of lusty folk What Wiste I Where my grace
Was shapyn forto be or in What place
Therfore I made my visitacions
To vigilis and to processions
To prechinge eke and to pilgremagis
To pleyis of myracles and to mariagis
And Wered vp on my gay scarlet gites
Thyse Wormys ne these mowthis ne thyse mytis
Vpon my parel fed[illegible]hem neuer adeel
And Wost thow Why for they Were vsed Wel
Now Wol I telle forth What happed me
I say that in the feldis Walkid We
Til truly that We hadde suche daliaunce
This clerk and I What of my purueaunce

I ſpak to hym and ſayde how that he
If I were widow ſhe ſholde wedde me
For certeyn I ſay you for no lobance
Yet was I neuer withoute purueaunce
Of mariage ne of othir thingis eek
I holde a mans herte not worth a leek
That hath but on hool to ſterte to
And yf that fayle than is al I do
I bare hym on hond/he hadde enchauntid me
My dame taughte me forſoth that ſotilte
And eke I ſayde y mette of hym al nyght
He wolde a ſchamed me as I lay vp right
And al my bed was ful of fery blood
But yet I hope truly ye ſchul do me good
For blood betokenyth gold/as I was taught
And al was fals I dremed of him right naught
But as I folowid ay my dames lore
As wel of that as of othir thingis more
And now ſire lete ſe what ſholde y ſayn
A ha by god I haue my tale agayn
Whan that my fourthe huſbond was on bere
I wepte algate and made a ſory chere
As wyuys moten for it is the vſage
And with my kercher I cledid my viſage
But for that I was purueyed of a make
I wepte ful litel I dar vndertake
To chirche was my huſbond borin on morow
With neyghbours that for hym made ſorow
And Jankyn our clerk was on of tho

As helpe me god whan I shall hym go
After the leeve me thoughte he had a peyre
Of leggis and feet so clene and so feyre
That al my herte I yaf vnto his hold
He was I trowe twenty wynter old
But I was .xl. yf I shal sey the soth
But yet I hade allwey a coltis toth
Sappe tothid y was but that he cam me weel
I hade the peynt of saint venus fel
As helpe god I was a ful lusty on
And feir and riche and yong & wel begoon
And trewly as my husbondis tolde me
I hade the beste queynte that myghte be
For certis I am al fully venerian
In felinge and my herte is marcian
Venus me yaf my lust and likerousnesse
And marce yaf me my sturdy hardynesse
Myn ascendaunt was taure and mars ther yn
Allas allas that euer loue was synne
In folowynge ay myn inclinacion
Be vertu of my constellacion
That made me that I coude not withdrawe
My chambir of venus fro a goode felawe
Yet haue I a marke of mars vp on my face
And also in another priuy place
For god so wisly be my sauacion
I louyd neuer be non discrecion
But euer folowid myn appetit
Al were he longe short black or whit

I took no kepe so that he liked me
Holw poure he was ne eke of what degre
What sholde y say but at the monthis ende
This ioly clerk Jankyn that was so hende
Hath wedded me with gret solempnyte
And to hym yaf I bothe lond and fee
That euer was yeue me therbefore
But aftirward me repentid it ful sore
He nolde suffre no thing of my list
We gon he smoot me onys with his fist
On the cheke for y wente out of his hook aleef
That of the stroke myn eye wext al deef
Stiborne I was as is a lyonesse
And of my tunge a lery Jangelresse
And walke I wolde as I won hadde before
Fro hous to hous al though he hadde yswore
For whiche he ofte tyme wolde preche
And me of olde Romaunce talis teche
How he simplicines gallus lefte his wyf
And he forsook her terme of al his lyf
Not but for ones opyn he her say
Lolyng out of his dore vp on a day
Anothir wyf tolde he me he name
But for his wyf was at a someris game
Withoute his wyting he forsook her eek
And than wolde he vp on his bible seke
That ilke prouerbe of Ecclesiast
Where he comaundith and biddith fast
Men shal not suffre her wyues to wyle aboute

Than wolde he say thus withouten doute
Who so bildith his hous al of salowis
And pryke his blynde hors ouer the falowis
And suffrith his wyf to seke halowis
He is worthy to be hongid on the galowis
But al for nought I set nat an halwe
Of alle his prouerbis ne of al his olde salwe
Ne I wolde not of hym correctid be
I hate hym that telleth his vices vnto me
And so do mo godi woot of vs than I
This made hym wood with me al vtirly
I wolde not forbere hym in no caas
Nolw wol I say soth be saint Thomas
Why that I rente out of his book a leef
For which he smot me so that I was deef
He hadde a book that gladly wolde nyght & day
For his disport he wolde rede alway
He clepid it Valery and Theophraste
Atte which book he lough alwey faste
And eke therwas a clerk som tyme in Rome
A Cardinal that highte seynt Jerome
That made a book agayn Jonynyan
In which book therwas eek tertulan
Crisippus Trotula and helowis
That was Abbesse not fer fro Paris
And parabolis of wyse Salamon
Ouydes art and eek bokis many on
And alle thyse were bounden in on volume
And euery day and nyght was his custume

Whan he hadde leyser and ony vacacion
Fro al other Wordly occupacion
To redyn on this book of Wickidy Wyuys
He knelb of hem mo legendis and liuys
Than be of gode Wyuys in the bible
For trustith Wel it is an impossible
That ony clerk Wol speke goody of Wyuys
But yf it be of holy fayntis lyuys
Ne of non othir Woman neuer ellis mo
Who peyntyd the lyoun tel me Who
Begody yf Women hadde Wrytyn storiys
As clerkis haue in her Oratorys
They Wolde haue Writen of mey more Wickidnes
Than al the marke of Adam may redresse
The childryn of Mercury and venus
Been in her Workyngy ful contrarious
Mercuri louith Wisedom and science
And venus louith riot and dispence
And for her dyuers disposicion
Eche fallyth in othris exaltacion
That thus gody Woot Mercury is dissolate
In pisces Whan venus is exaltate
And venus fallith ther Mercury is reysid
Therfore Women of no clerk is preysid
The clerk Whan he is oldy and may nought do
Of venus Workis not Worth his oldy sho
Than sittith he doun and Writith in his dotage
That Women can not kepe her mariage
But now to purpos Why I tolde the

That J Was betyn for a book parde
Up on a nyght Jankyn that Was our syre
Radde on his book as he sat be the fyre
Of Eue first that for hir Wickednes
Was al mankynde brought to Wreachidnes
For Which that Jhesu crist hym self Was slayn
That boughte vs With his herte bloody agayn
Lo here expres of Women may ye fynde
That Woman Was the los of al mankynde
To rede he me holde Sampson loste his heris
Slepinge his lemman kit hem With her sheris
Thorough Whiche treson lost he bothe his yen
Tho radde he yf that J shal not lyen
Of Hercules and of Dyanyre
That causith hym to sette hym self a fyre
No thyng forgat he the sorwe and the Woo
That Socrates hadde With his Wyues two
Holde Exantippa cast pisse vp on his hed
This sely man sat stille as he Were ded
He Wipith his hed no Word durste he sayn
But or the thunder stynte comyth rayn
Of Philip that Was the quene of Crete
For shrewdnesse hym thoughte it swete
Fy spek no more it is a grisly thing
Of her horrible lust and of her likyng
Of Cletemystra for her high lecherye
That fasly made her husbond to dye
He redde it With ful good deuocion
He tolde me eke for What conclusion

Amphiorayꝛe at Thebes loſte his liſ
Myn huſbonde hadde a legende of his Wyf
Eriphidey that for any ouche of gold
Hath priuely vnto the grekis told
Where that her huſbonde hidde him in a place
For Whiche he hadde at thebes a ſcri grace
Of lima tolde he me ꝛ of lucy
They bothe made her huſbondis forto dy
That one for loue that other Was for hate
Lyma her huſbonde vpon a nyght late
Enpoyſond him for ſche Was his fo
Lucia likewons loued her huſbond ſo
For he ſholde algatis ouhere thynke
She yaf vnto hym ſuch aloue drynke
That he Was ded or it Was at morwe
Andy thus algate huſbondis hadde ſorwe
Thanne tolde he me howe that lacyuius
Compleyned howe that fel many arriius
That in his gardyn growde ſuch a tre
On Which he ſaide howe that his Wyuis thre
Hanged hem ſelff for her hertis deſpitous
O leue brothir ſaidy than this arriius
Zif me a plante of that bliſſid tre
And in myn gardyn plantid ſhal it be
Of latter date of Wyuis hath he red
That ſome haue ſleyn her huſbondis abed
And leet her lechour ſWyue hem al the nyght
Whilis that the corps lay in floor vpright
Andy ſome haue driue nailis in her brayn

Whilis that they ſlepte & thus they haue hem ſlaín
Some haue yeue hem poyſon in her drynke
He ſpak more harm than herte may thynke
And therwith al he coude mo prouerbis
Than in this worlde growe gras or herbis
Better is quod he thyn habitacion
Be with a lioun or with a dragon
Than with a woman vſynge forto chyde
Better is quod he high in his roof abyde
Than with an angry wyf duellinge in his hous
They be so wickid and so contrarious
They hatey that her huſbondis loue ay
He ſayde a woman caſt her ſchame away
Whan ſhe caſt of her ſmok and ferther mo
A fair woman but ſhe be chaſt alſo
Ys lik a goldrynge on a ſolbys noſe
Who wolde leue or who wolde ſuppoſe
The wo that in myn herte was and pyne
And whan I ſaw that he wolde neuer fyne
To redyn on his curſid book al nyght
Al ſodenly thre leuys haue I plight
Out of his book right as he redde and eek
I with my fiſt ſo took hym on the cheek
That in our fyre he fyl backward adown
And he vp ſtert as doth a wood lioun
And with his fiſt he ſmot me on the hed
That in the flore I lay as I hadde be ded
And whan he ſaw how ſtylle that I lay
He was agaſt and wolde haue fled away

Til atte laſt J out of my ſWoWne abreid
O haſt thou ſlayn me fals theef J ſeid
And for my lond thus haſt thou murdred me
Or J be ded zit Wol J onys kiſſe the
And neer he cam & knelid faire adoun
And ſayde dere ſuſter ſWete aliſoun
As helpe me god J ſhal the neuir ſmyte
That y haue do it is thy ſelf to Wite
Forzeue it me and that J the beſeke
And zit eft ſonys J hitte hun on the cheke
And ſaide theef thus muche J am beWreke
NoW Wol J dy J may no lenger ſpeke
But atte laſte Wyth muche care and Woo
We fil accordid be our ſelfyn tWo
He yaf me the bridil in my hond
To haue the gouernaunce of hons & lond
And aſtir of his tunge & of his hond alſo
And made hun brenne his book anon to
And thamme Whan J hade gotyn hnto me
The maiſtrie & eek the ſouereynte
And thamme he ſaide myn oWen treW Wif
Doth as you liſt al the tezme of your lyf
Kepe thin honour and eke myn aſtate
And after that day We hade neuer debaat
God helpe me ſo J Was to hym as kynde
As any Wyff fro denmark in to ynde
And alſo treWe and ſo Was he to me
I pray to god yat ſittith in mageſte
So bleſſe his ſonle for his mercy dere

Now wol I say my tale yf ye wol here
The frere lowgh whan he hade herd al this
Now dame quod he so haue I ioye and blis
This is a longe preambil of a tale
And whan the sompnour herde the frere gale
Lo quod the Sompnour for godes armys two
A frere wol entremete hym euermo
Lo gode men a flye and eek a frere
Wol falle in euery mannys dissh and matere
What spekist thou of preambulacion
What ambyl or trot go pysse or syt a doun
Thou lettyst our disport in this matere
Ye wolt thou so sir Sompnour quod the frere
Now be my feith I shal or that I go
Telle of a Sompnour suche a tale or two
That alle folk shal lawghe in this place
Now ellis frere y be shrewe thy face
Quod this sompnour and I beshrewe me
But yf I telle talis two or three
Of freris or that I come to Sidyngbourne
That I shal make the forto mourne
For wel y woot thy pacience is goon
Our oste cryde pees and that anon
And sayde let the woman telle her tale
Ye fauen as folk that dronke ben of ale
Gode dame tel forth your tale and that is best
Al redy syre quod she right as you list
Yf I haue licence of this worthy frere
Yes dame quod he tel forth and I wol here

Here endith the Wyff of Bathes prologe.
And here begynnyth her tale.

IN olde dayes of kyng Artur
Of Whiche britous spekith gret honour
All Was this londe fulfilled of fayrye
The elf quene With her ioly companye
Daunced ful ofte in meny a greue mede
This Was the olde opinion as I rede
I speke of many an hundrid yeris ago
But now can noman se elphis mo
For now the grete charite and praieres
Of limytours and eke of othir freris
That serchen euery londe and euery streme
As thicke as motis in the sonne beme
Blissinge hallis chambris kechens and bowris
Cites Burghis castellis and eek touris
Shoppis bernys Shepens and dayries
This makith that ther be no feyries
For there as wont Was to walke an elf
There walkith now the limytour hym self
In vndermelis and in mornyngis
And seith his matyns and his thingis
As he goth forth in his limytacion
A Woman may go sauely vp and doun
Vnder euery busshe or vnder euery tre
There is none other incubus but he
And he ne wolde do hem ony dishonour
And so befil that this kyng Arthour
Hadde in his hous a lusty bacheler

That on a day com ridynge from the ryuere
And happidy that allone as he was bozn
He ſaw a mayde walkynge hym beforn
Of whiche mayde anon magre her hedy
He ſtrcy force byreſte her her maydenhedy
For whiche oppreſſion was ſuche clamour
And ſuche purſute vnto kyng Arthour
That dampnedy was this knyght to be dedy
He cours of kalde he ſholde haue loſt his hedy
Paraventure ſuche was the ſtatut tho
But that the quene andy other ladyes mo
So longe praiden the kyng of grace
Til he his liff grauntidy in that place
And yaf hym to the quene al at her wille
To chese whether ſhe wolde hym ſaue or ſpylle
The quene thankidy the kyng with al her might
And aftir thus ſpak ſhe to the knyght
Whan ſhe ſalde her tyme vp on a day
Thou ſtondiſt yet in ſuche aray
That of thy lyf yet haſt thou no ſuerte
I graunte thy lyf yf thou canſt telle me
What thyng it is that women moſt deſiren
Beware and keep thy necke from iren
And yf thou canſt not telle it anon
I ſhal the yeue yet leue forto goon
A twelfmonthe andy a day to ſeche andy to lere
An anſwere ſufficiaunt in this matere
And ſuerte wol I haue or that thou paſſe
Thy body forto yeldyn in this place

Woo Was this knyght and sowlful he sighith
But he may not do al as hym likith
And atte laste he chaas hym forto Wende
And come ayeen right at the yeris ende
With suche answer as godi Wolde hym purueye
And takith his leue & Wendith forth his Weye
He sekith euery hous and euery place
Where as he hopith forto fynde grace
To Wite What thingi Women louedi most
But he coude aspye in no ost
There as he myght fynde in this matere
Two creaturis accordinge in fere
Some sayde Women louedi best richesse
Some sayde honour som sayde Jolinesse
And ofte tymes to be Widowh and to be Wedi
Some sayde riche aray som sayde lust a bedi
Some sayde that We be in herte most esidi
Whan We be flateridi and plesidi
He goth ful nygh the soth I Wol not lye
A man shal best Wynne vs With flaterye
And With attendaunce and With besines
Wey We y limydi bothe more and les
And som sayde that We loue best
Forto be fre and do right as vs list
And that noman repreue vs of our vice
But sey that We be Wyse and no thingi nyce
For truly ther is noy of vs alle
Yf ony Wight Wol clawe vs on the galle
That We nel kyke for he saith vs soth

Assay and he shal fynde it that it doth
For he we neuer so vicious with ynne
We wol beholden wyse and cleen out of synne
And some sayde grete delit haue we
For to beholde stabil and eke secre
And in on purpos stedfastly to dwelle
And not to bewreye that men vs telle
But that tale is not worth a rake stele
Parde we women can no thing hele
Witnes on Myda wol ye here the tale
Ouide among other thingis smale
Sayde Myda hadde vnder his longe heris
Growynge vpon his hed two assis eris
The whiche vice he hidde as he best myghte
Ful subtally from euery mannys sighte
That saue his wyf ther wyste of it nomo
He louyd her most and trustid her also
He prayde her that to no maner creature
She wolde telle of his foul disfigure
She swore hym that for al the worlde to wynne
She nolde do that felony ne synne
To make her husbonde to haue so foul a name
She wolde not it for her owyn shame
But natheles she thoughte that she deyde
That she so longe sholde a counsel hide
She thoughte it was so sore aboute her herte
That nedis som wordy her moste a sterte
And sith she durste telle it to no man
Down to the marice faste she ran

Tyl ſhe cam there her herte was in fyre
Andy as a bitore blondrith in the myre
She leyde her mouth vnto the watir doun
Bewrey me not thou watir with thy ſoun
Quod ſhe to the I telle it andy to no mo
Myn huſbonde hath longe aſſis eris two
Nolw is myn herte al hool nolw is it oute
I myght no lenger kepe it out of doute
Here molwe ye ſe though we a tyme abyde
Yet out it muſte we can no counſel hyde
The remenant of the tale yf ye wil here
Redith Ouyde andy there ye may it lere
This knyght of whom my tale is ſpecially
Whan that he ſalw he might not come therby
This is to ſay what woman louen moſt
With ynne his breſt ſo ſorouful was his goſt
But hoom he goth he might not ſoiourne
The day was come that homward moſte he tourne
Andy in his wey as happidy hym to ryde
In al his care vnder a forest ſyde
Where as he ſalw vpon a daunce go
Of ladijs + xviij + andy yet mo
Toward which daunce he drow ful yerne
In hope that he ſholde ſom wiſdom lerne
But certeinly or that he cam fully there
Vanyſſhed was this daunce he nyſte where
No creature ſalw he that daar lyff
Saue on the grene he ſalw ſittyng a wyf
A fouler wight ther might noman deuyſe

Agayn this knyght this olde wyf gan ryse
And sayde sir knyght herforth lith no way
Tel me what ye seke be your fay
Parauenture it may the bettir be
Thyse olde folk can muche thing quod she
My leue moder quod this knyght certeyn
I am but ded but yf that I can sayn
What thing it is that women most desire
Coude ye me wisse I wolde quyte wel your hire
Plight me thy trouthe here in my hond quod she
The nexte thing that I requyre the
Thou shalt it do yf it ly in thy myght
And I wol telle it you or it be nyght
Haue here my trouthe quod the knyght I graunte
Than quod she I dar wel make auaunte
Thy lyf is sauf for I wol stonde ther by
Up on my lyf the quene wol say as I
Lete se whiche is the prowdist of hem alle
That werith othir kerchef or calle
That dar say nay that I wol the teche
Lec vs go forth without more speche
Tho wowned she a pistil in his here
And bad hym be glad and haue no fere
Whan they be comyn to the court this knyght
Sayde he kepte his day as he had hight
And redy was his answer for to haue sayde
Ful many a nobil wyf and many a mayde
And many a widow for that they be wyse
The quene her self sittyng as Justyse

Assembliȝ been his answer for to here
Andȝ afterwardȝ this knight was bodiȝ tapere
Andȝ that euery wight was comaundiȝ silence
Andȝ that the knyght shold telle in audience
What thingȝ that worldy women loue best
This knyght stoodȝ not stille as doth a beest
But to his questiȝ anoȝ answerde
With manly voys that al the court it herde
My liege lady themme generall quod he
Women desiren to haue souereynte
As wel of her husbondis as of hir loue
Andȝ forto ley in maistrye aboue
This is your most desire though ye wil me kille
Doth as you list I am at your wille
In al the court ne was ther wyf ne mayde
Ne widow that contrariedȝ that he sayde
But sayde he was worthy to haue his lyf
Andȝ at that wordȝ vpstert this olde wif
Whiche that the knyght sawh sittynge on the grene
Mercy quod she my souereiȝ lady quene
Er that your court departe as doth me right
I taught this answer vnto the knyght
For whiche he plighte me his trouthe there
The firste thing I wolde hym requere
He wolde hit do yf it lay in his myght
Before this court than I pray the sir knyght
Quod she that thou me take vnto thy wif
For wel thou wotist that I haue sauedȝ thy lyf
If I swere fals swere nay vpon thy fey

The knyght answerde and sayde Wel alwey
I woot right weel that suche was my beheste
For goddis loue chees a nelwe requeste
Take al my goody and lat my body go
Nay than quod she I shrewe hs bothe two
For though that I be foul oldy and poor
I wol not for al the metal and the oor
That vnder the grounde lith othir aboue
But y thy wyf were and eke thy loue
My loue quod he nay parde my dampnacion
Allas that euer ony of my nacion
So foule sholde euer disperagedy be
But al for nought the ende is thus that he
Constreynedy was nedis muste he wedde
And take his olde wif and go to bedde
Nolw wolde som men sayn parauenture
For myn negligence I do no cure
To telle you the ioye and al the aray
That atte feste was that ilke day
To whiche thingy shortly I answer shal
I say there was no feste ne ioye at al
There nas but heuynes and muchel sorwe
For priuely he weddidy here by the morwe
And al day after hidde hym as an owle
So wo was hym his wif lokidy so foule
Gret was the wo that the knyght hady in thought
Whey he was with his wif a bedde y brought
He walowith and he turnyth to and fro
His olde wif lay simplinge euer mo

And sayde o dere husbonde benedicite
Farith euery knyght with his wyf as ye
Is this the lawe of kyng Arthours hous
Is euery knyght of his loue so daungerous
I am your owen loue and eke your wyf
I am she whiche that sauedy hath your lyf
And certis yet I dede you neuer vnright
Why fare ye thus with me the firste nyght
Ye fare lik a man hadde lost his wit
What is my gilt for goddis loue tel me it
And it shal be amendedy yf that I may
Amendidy qdy this knyght alas nay nay
It wol not be amendidy nauer the mo
Thow art so lothly and so olde also
And therto comyn of so low a kynde
That litil wonder is though I walow & wynde
So wolde to god quod he myn herte wolde breste
Is this quod she the cause of your vnreste
Ye certeyn quod he no wonder it is
Now sire qdy she I coude amende al this
Yf that me list or hit be daies three
So wel ye mighte bere you vnto me
But for ye spekyn of suche gentilnes
As is descendidy out of oldy riches
That therfore ye shulde be gentilmen
Suche arrogaunce is not worth an hen
Loke who is most vertuous alwey
Pryuy and apert and most entendith ay
To do the gentilist dedis that he can

Take hym for the grettist gentilman
First Wol We clayme of hym our gentilnes
Not of our eldres for her olde riches
For though they yeue vs al her heritage
For Whiche We claymen to be of here parage
Yet may they bequede for no thing
To none of vs her vertuous leuynge
That made hem gentilmen callid to be
And bad hem folowe vs in suche degre
Wel can the Wyse Poet of Florence
That hight dante speke of this sentence
Lo in suche manere ryme is dantis tale
Ful selde vp rysid be his braunchis male
Preuys of man for god of his goodnes
Wol that of hym We clayme our gentilnes
For of our oldris may We no thing clayme
But temporel thing that may hurte & mayme
Eke euery Wight Woot this as Wel as I
If gentilnes Were plantid naturally
Vnto a certeyn lynage doun the lyne
Priuy and pert than Wol they not fyne
To do of gentilnes the feir office
They might do no vilony or vice
Take fyre and bere it in to the derkist hous
Betwix this and the mounte of Cancasus
And let men shitte the doris and go theme
Yet Wol the fyre as fair ly and breme
As twenty thousand men might it beholde
His office naturelly ay Wol he holde

Up peril of my lif tyl that it dye
Here may ye se how that gentrye
Is not annexed to possessioun
Suche folk ne doth her operacioun
Alwey as doth the fyre in his kynde
For ged it woot men may ful ofte fynde
A lordis sone do shame and velony
And he that wol haue price of his gentrye
For he was lordy of a gentil hous
And hadde his eldris nobil and vertuous
And nyl hem self do no gentil dedis
Ne folowen the dedis of his auncetrys
He is not gentil be he duk be he erle
For vileyns sinful dedis makyn a cherle
For gentilnes nys but the renome
Of thyn auncetris for her high bounte
Whiche is a straunge thing to thy persone
Thy gentilnes comyth fro god alone
Than comyth our verry gentilnes of grace
It was no thing be quedyn vs with our place
Thynkith how nobil as seith Valerius
Was that Romayn Tullius Hostilius
That out of pouert roos to high noblesse
Redith Senek and redith eke Boece
There shul ye se expres that no drede is
That he is gentil that doth gentil dedis
And therfore leue husbonde thus I conclude
Were it that myn auncestris were rude
Yet may the hye god and so hope I

Graunte me grace to lyue vertuously
Thay am I gentil Whey I begynne
To lyue vertuously and do a Wey synne
And there as ye of pouerte me repreue
That high god on Whom hoolly We beleue
In ful hertis pouerte chees to lede his lyf
And syns euery may maydey or Wyf
May vnderstonde that Jhesus our heuyn kyngy
Ne Wolde not chese a uicyous lynynge
Glady pouert is a ful honest thyngy certeyn
This Wol Senec and other clerkis sayn
Who so that holdith hym paidy of his pouert
I holde hym riche and he hady not a shert
He that coueytith he is a ful poure Wight
For he Wolde haue that is not in his myght
But he þ nought hath nought coueytith to haue
Is riche al though ye holde hym but a knaue
Verry pouerte is an high ioye properly
Juuenal spekith therof ful merily
The poure may Whan he goth he the Wey
Before the theuys he may synge and ply
Pouert is hateful goody as I ges
A ful gret brynger out of besynes
A great amender eke of sapience
To hym that takith it in pacience
Pouerte is this al thogh it seme elenge
Possessioury that noman Wolde gladly chalenge
Pouerte ful ofte Whan a may is lowe
Makith his gody and eke hym self to knowe

Pouert a ſpectakil is as thinkith me
Thorow Whiche he may his very frendis ſe
And therfore ſir ſith therin ye be greued
Of my pouert late me nomore be repreued
Nor ſire of elde alſo ye repreuyd me
And certis ſire though non auctorite
Were in the book the gentil of hauour
Sayn that men ſholde an olde Wyf do honour
And clepid fader for their gentilnes
And auctours ſhal I fynde as I ges
Nor there as ye ſay I am foul and old
Than drede ye not to be made Cokeold
For filthe elde and foul ſo mot I the
Been grete Wardeyns upon chaſtite
But natheles ſith I knowe your delit
I ſhal fulfille your Wordly appetit
Chees now qd ſhe on of thyſe thingis tweye
To haue me olde and foul til that I deye
And be to you a trewe humble Wyff
And neuer you diſpleſe m al my lyff
Or ellis ye ſhal haue me yong and feyr
And take your auenture of the repeyr
That to your hous ſhal be by cauſe of me
Or in ſom other place may wel be
Now chees Whether that ye liketh
This knyght auyſith hym and ſiketh
But at the laſte he ſayde in this manere
My lady my loue and my Wyf ſo dere
I put me fully in your Wyſe gouernaunce

Chese it your self whiche may be moze plesaunce
And most honour to you and to me also
I do no force whethir of the two
But as you likith it sufficith to me
Than I haue gote of you the maistrye quod she
Syn I may chese and gouerne you as me list
Ye certis wyf quod he I holde it for the best
Kys me quod she we be no lengir wroth
For be my trouthe quod she I wol to you be both
That is to say both fair and eek good
I pray to god that I muste sterue wood
But I to you be also good and trewe
As euer was wyf syn the worlde was newe
And but I be to morow as fair to sene
As ony lady Empereresse or quene
That is betwixt the est and the west
Both with my lyf and deth as you list
And so they slepte til it was morow gray
And then she sayde whan it was day
Cast vp the curtey loke how it is
And when the knyght saw verily al this
That she so fair was and so yong therto
For ioye he hent hir in his armys two
His herte was bathid in a bath of blis
A thousand tyme a rowe he gan hir kis
She obeyed hym in euery thing
That might do hym plesaunce or likyng
And thus they lyue vnto her lyues ende
And parfyt ioye as Jhu vs sende

Husbondis meke yongh and fresh a bedde
And grace to our kyue hem that We Wedde
And eek I pray Jhesus shorte her liuys
That Wol not be gouernedh be her Wyuys
And olde and angry nygardis of dispence
God sende hem sone a foul lerry pestilence

¶ Here endith the tale of the Wyf of bathe.
¶ And begynneth the prologh of the freere.

This nobyl limytour this Worthy freere
He made alWey a maner lourynh there
Up on the sompnour but for honeste
No Wileyns Wordh as yet spak he
But atte laste he sayde vnto the Wyf of bathe
Dame qdh he godh you euer kepe fro scathe
For here ye haue touchidh also moot y the
In scole mater a ful greet difficulte
Ye haue saidh muche thingh right oriously
But dame here as ye ridh be the Wey
Vs nedith not to spekе but of game
And lete auctours be a goddis name
To prechinge and to scole of clergye
And yf it likith vnto this gentil companye
I Wolde you of a sompnour telle a game
Parde ye molde Wel knoWen be the name
That of a sompnour may no gode be saidh
I pray that noh of you be euyl a payde
A sompnour is a renner vp and doWn
With maundementis for fornicacion
And y bete at euery tolWnys ende

Our oste than spak a sir ye shold be hende
And certis a man of your astat
In company We wol haue no debat
Tellith your tale and leet the sompnour be
Nay quod the sompnour let hym say by me
What so hym list When it comyth to my lot
Be god I shal hym quyte euery grot
I shal hym telle Whiche a gret honour
It is to be a flateryng lymytour
And of many another maner crime
Whiche nedith not to reherce at this tyme
And his office I shal hym telle ybis
Our ost answerde pes nomore of this
And after this he sayde vnto the freere
Tel forth your tale myn owyn maister deere

Here endith the Frers prologe.
And here begynneth his tale.

WHilom ther was dwellyng in my contre
A archedekyn a man of high degre
That boldly did ful many an execucion
In punysshynge of euery fornicacion
Of Whichecraft and eke of baudrye
Of diffamacion and auoutrye
Of chirche Reuys and of testamentis
Of contract and of lak of sacramentis
Of vsurye and eke of symonye also
But certis lechours did he muche Woo
They sholde syngen yf that they Were hent
And smale tithers also Were soule shent

If ony person wolde vpon hym pleyne
There might asterte no peaunial peyne
For smale tithis and smale offerynge
He made the pepyl ful pitously to synge
For or the bisshop caught hym with his hook
They were in the archedekenys book
And than hadde he thourgh his Jurisdiction
Poure of hem to do ful correction
He hadde a sompnour redy to his hond
A slygher boy was non in engelond
For sotilly he hadde his especial
That taughte hym where he might auayl
He knew of lechours one or two
To teche hym to foure and twenty mo
For though ỹ sompnour were as wood as ay hare
To telle his harlotrye I wol not spare
For we be out of his correction
They haue of vs no Jurisdiction
Ne neuer shal terme of al her lyuys
Peter so be women of the styuys
Quod the sompnour put out of my cure
Pees with myschaunce or with mys auenture
Sayde our ost and leet hym telle his tale
Now tel forth though the sompnour gale
Ne sparith not myn olley maister dere
This fals theef the sompnour qdy the freere
Hadde alwey redy baudis to his honde
As ony hawk is to the lure in engelonde
That tolde hym al the secre that they coude

For her acqueyntaunce was nat alwey nouthe
They were alle his approwers priuely
He took hym self a gret prouffit therby
His maister knew not alwey what he way
Withouten maundementis of lewdy mey
He coude sompne on peyne of cristis curs
And they were glady forto fillen his purs
And make hym grete festis at the nale
And right as Judas hade pursis smale
And was a theef right such a theef was he
His maister hade but half his dute
He was yf I shal yeue hym the laude
A theef a Sompnour and eke a laude
He hade eke wenchis at his retenu
That whether sir Robert or sir hue
Or Jacke or Raaf or who so that it were
That lay by hem they tolde hym in his ere
Thus were the wenchis and he of on assent
And he wolde fet a faynydy maundement
And sompne hem to the Chapetre bothe two
And pyle the may and lete the wenche go
Thay wolde he say frendy I shal for thy sake
So stryke her out of our lettris blake
The dar nomore as in this caas trauayle
I am thy frendy there I may the auayle
Certeyn he knew of bribours meny mo
Thay possible is to telle in yeris two
For in this worlde nys dogge for the bowe
That can an hurt dere from an hool knowe

Better than this sompnour knoweth a lechour
Or a boutrer or ellis ony paramour
And for that was the fruyt of al his rent
Therfore on it he sette al his entent
And so kefyl that onys vp on a day
This sompnour was euer waytyng his pray
For to sompne an olde wyf horrible
Feynynge a cause for he wolde her bridil
It happid that he sawh kefore hym ryde
A gay yeman vnder a forest syde
A kolwe he baar and arowis bright and kene
He hadde vpon hym a kirtil of grene
An hat vp on his hed with strengis blake
Sire quod the sompnour heyl and wel y take
Welcome quod he and euery goody felawh
Whithir ridist thou vnder this grene wode schawh
Sayde this yoman wolt thou fare with me to day
This sompnour answerde and sayde nay
Here faste by quod he is myn entent
To ridyn forto reyse vp al the rent
That longith now to my lordis duete
Art thou than a baylle ye quod he
He ne durste for kelonye and schame
Say that he was a sompnour for the name
Depardeux quod this sompnour dere brother
Thou art a baylle and I am another
I am vnknowen now in this contre
Of thyn acqueyntaunce therme I pray the
And eek of bretherhed yf that thou list

I haue goldy and ſiluyr in my chiſt
Yf that the happith to come in our ſhire
Al ſhal be thyn right as thou wolt deſire
Gramercy quod this ſompnour be my feith
Euerich in other hondy he leyith
Forto be ſworn til that they deye
In daliaunce they ryde forth and pleye
This ſompnour whiche was ful of Jangelis
As ful of lenym ley thyſe wereiangelis
And euer enquirynge vpon euery thinge
Brothir quod he where is nowe your duellynge
Anothir day yf that I ſhal you ſeche
This yoman hym anſwerde with ſofte ſpeche
Brother quod he fer in the north cuntre
Where as I hope ſom tyme I ſhal the ſe
Er we departe y ſhal the ſo wel wis
That of my hous ne ſhalt thou neuer mys
Nowe brother quod this ſompnour I you pray
Teche me whyles ye ridith be the way
Syn that ye be a bayliy and ſo am I
Som ſubtilte as tellith me feithfully
In myn office how I may moſt winne
And ſparith not for conſcience of ſynne
But dere brothir tel me how do ye
Nowe be my trouthe dere brother ſaidy he
As I ſhal telle the a faithful tale
My wagis be ful ſtreit and ſmale
My lordy is hardy to me and daungerous
And myn office is ful laborous

And therfore by extorcions I lyue
For soth I take al that men wol me yeue
Algate be sleyghte or be violence
From yeer to yeer I wynne al my dispence
I can no bettir telle the feithfully
Now certis quod the sompnour so fare I
I spare not to take god it wot
But yf it be to hey or to hoot
That I may gete in counsel priuely
Nomore conscience of that haue I
Nere myn extorcioun I mighte not kuyn
Of suche iapis wol I not be shryuyn
Stomak ne conscience knowe I none
I shrewe the shriftefadris euerichone
Wel be we met be god and be saint Jame
But leue brothir tel me thy name
Quod this sompnour in this mene whyle
This yeman gan a litel forto smyle
Brothir quod he wolt thou that y the telle
I am a fend my duellynge is in helle
And here I ryde aboute my purchasinge
To wite if men wol yeue me ony thinge
To purchace is the effect of al my rent
Loke how thou ridist for al the same entent
To winne good thou reckist neuer how
Right so fare I for ryde wold I now
Vnto the worldis ende for a pray
A quod the sompnour benedicite what ye say
I wende ye hadde ben a yoman trewly

Ye haue a mannys ſchap as Wel as J
Haue ye than a figure determynat
In helle there ye be in your eſtat
Nay certeinly quod he there haue We noon
But Whan Vs likith We can take Vs on
Or ellis make you Wene We be ſchape
Sometyme lik a man and ſometyme lik an ape
Or lik an aungel can J ryde or go
It is no Wonder thing though it be ſo
A lowſy iogolour can diſceyue the
And parde yet more craft can J than he
Why quod the ſompnour ryde ye than or goon
In ſundry ſchap and not alWey in oon
For We qth he Wol Vs in ſuche fourme make
As moſt auayl is our prayes forto take
What makith you to haue al this labour
Wel many a cauſe leue ſir ſompnour
Sayde this fend but al thing hath tyme
The day is ſhort and it is paſſid pryme
And yet ne gat J no thing in this day
I Wol entende to Wynnynge yf J may
And not entende our Wittis to declare
For brothir myne thy Wittis ben al to bare
To Vnderſtonde though J tolde hem the
But for thou aſkiſt Why laboure We
For ſumtyme We be goddis inſtrumentis
And meues to do his comaundementis
Whan that hym liſt Vpon his creaturis
In diuers acte and in diuers figuris

Withoute hym We haue no might certeyn
Yf that hym list to stonden there agayn
Andy som tyme at our pray haue We leue
Only the soule andy not the body to greue
Witnes of Job Whom We dide Woo
Andy som tyme haue We might on bothe two
This is to say on soule andy on body eek
Andy somtyme We be suffrid for to seke
Up on a man andy do his soule unreste
Andy not his body andy al for the beste
Whan he withstandith our temptacion
It is a cause of his saluacion
Al be it that it Was not oure entent
He sholde be saaf by goddis Jugement
Andy somtyme We be seruaunt unto man
As to the archebisshop saint Dunstan
Andy to the apostil seruaunt Was J
Yet tel me quod the sompnour feithfully
Make ye your bodyes in suche Wyse alWay
Of elementis the fendy answerde nay
Som tyme We faynyn andy som tyme We aryse
With dede bodyes in fele sondry Wyse
Andy speke as resonabil faire andy Wel
As the Phitonysse didy to Samuel
Andy yet Wol som men sayn it Was not he
J do no force of your diuinite
But o thing Warne J the J Wol not iape
Thou Wolt Wete algatis sone We be shape
Thou shalt here aftirWardy my brother dere

Come Where it nedith not of me to lere
For thou shalt by thyn owen experience
Comme in the chayer vere this sentence
Better than Virgile Whyle he Was on lyue
Or dauidy also now leet be hyde belyue
For I Wol holde company With the
Til it be so that thou forsake me
Nay quod the sompnour that shal not betide
I am a yeman that knowen am ful Wyde
My trouthe Wol I holde to the as in this caas
For though Were the deuyl Sathanas
Take thou thy part of that men Wol the yeue
And I shal myne thus may We bothe lyue
And yf that ony of Vs haue more than other
Let hym it telle and parte With his brother
I graunte quod the deuyl be my fey
And With that Word they riden forth hir Wey
And right at an entre of a tounys ende
To Whiche the sompnour shoop hym forto Wende
They salle a carte that charged Was With hey
Whiche that a carter drof forth in the Wey
Deep Was the Wey for Whiche the Carte stood
This carter smoot and eyde as he Were Wood
What heyt brok heyt scot spare ye for the nonys
The fend quod he you fache body and bonys
As ferforth as euer ye Were y solid
So mykil Wo as I haue for you tholid
The deuyl haue bothe hors Carte and hey
Quod the sompnour here shal We haue a pley

And neer the feend he drow as naught ne were
Ful priuely and downedy in his ere
Herkyn my brother herkyn be thy feith
Heriſt thou not hou the carter ſeith
Take hit anon for he hath yeue it the
Both hey and carte and eek his capullis thre
Nay quod the deuyl/godyy Woot neuer a deel
It is not his entent truſt me weel
Aſke hym ſelf yf that thou trowweſt not me
Or ellis ſtynte awhyle and thou ſhalt ſe
This carter thrackidy his hors on the croupe
And they begonne to drawe and to ſtoupe
Hait now quod he that Jheſu criſt you bles
And al his hondy work bothe more and les
That was wel y twight myn owen liardy boy
I pray to godyy ſaue the and ſaint loy
Now is my carte out of the ſlowgh parde
Lo brother quod the fendy what tolde I the
Here may ye ſe myn owen dere brother
The churle ſpak o thingy but he thoughte another
Lat vs go forth aboute our viage
Here wynne I no thingy vpon this cariage
Whan that they comyn ſomwhat out of the touny
This ſompnour to his brothir gan to rouny
Brother quod he here wonyth an oldy rebecke
That hadde almoſt as leef to leſe her necke
As forto yeue apeny of her goody
I wol haue xij dy though that ſhe be woody
Or I wol ſomone hir vnto our office

And yet god woot of hir I knowe no vice
But for thou canst not as in this contre
Wynne thy cost/take here ensaumple of me
This sompnour clappith at the widowis gate
Com out he sayde thou olde verry trate
I trowe thou hast som preest or frere with the
Who knockith saidy this wyf benedicite
God saue you sir what is your swete wyl
I haue quod the sompnour of the a bil
Up on peyne of cursinge loke that you be
To morowe before the Archedekenys kne
To answere to the court of certeyn thingis
Nowe lordy quod she Jhesu crist heuene kyngis
So wisly helpe me as y ne may
I haue be sik andy that ful many a day
I may not go so fer quod she ne ryde
But I be dedy so prickith it in my syde
May I nat aye a libel sire sompnour
And answere there be my proktour
To suche thingis as men wol appose me
Yes quod the sompnour pay anon let se
Twelf pens to me andy I wol the quyte
I schal no prouffit haue therby but lyte
My maister hath the prouffit andy not I
Com of andy let me ryde hastely
Yaue me.yij.pens for I may no lenger tary
Xij.pens quod she a lady samte mary
So wisly helpe me out of care andy synne
This wyde worlde though I scholde it wynne

Ne haue I not ꝑdy ✝ With in my holde
Ye knowe wel that I am poure and old
Kithe your almes ou me poure wreche
May than quod he the foule fendy me feche
If I the excuse though thou sholdist be spilt
Allas qdy the gody woot I am not in the gilt
Pay me quod he or be swete samt anne
I wol anone lete alwey thyn nede pamme
For dette whiche thou owest me of olde
Whey that thou madist thyn husbondy cokeolde
I payde at hoom for thy correction
Thold lixt quod she be my saluacion
Ne was I neuer or nold widowe or wyf
Sompnedy vnto your court in al my lyf
Ne neuer y was but of my body trewe
Vnto the deuyl blak andy rowgh of hewe
Yeue I thy body andy eke my pamme to
Andy when the deuyl herde hir curse so
Up on her knees he sayde in this maneve
Nold mabyff myn owen moder dere
Is this your wyl in ernest as ye saye
The deuyl quod she fette hym or he dey
Andy pamme andy al but he wol hym repent
Nay olde stot that is not myn entent
Quod the sompnour forto repent me
For ony thingy that I haue hady of the
I wolde I hadde thy smok andy euery cloth
Now brothir quod the deuyl be not wroth
Thy body andy this pamme is myn be right

Thou ſhalt With me to helle yet to nyghe
Where thou ſhalt knowe of our priuyte
More than a mauſter of diuinite
And With that Word the foule fendy hym hent
Body and ſoule he With the deuyl Went
Where that thyſe ſompnours haue her heritage
And gody that made after his ymage
Mankynde ſaue and gide vs alle and ſom
And leue that Sompnours gode meny be com
Lordinge I coude telle you quod the freve
Hade I hady leue for this ſompnour here
After the text of criſt Poule and Johy
And of our other doctours meny oy
Suche poyntis as your hertis mighte agryſe
Al be it ſo nothinge may I deuyſe
Though that I mighte a thouſandy Wynter telle
The peynys of that curſidy peyne of helle
But forto kepe vs fro that curſidy place
Wakith and praieth Jheſu of his grace
So kepe vs fro the temptour Sathanas
Herkenyth this Wordy helpaar in this caas
The lioun ſittith in his a Wayte al Way
To ſle the Jnocent yf that he may
Diſpoſe ye your hertis ay to Withſtonde
The fendy that Wol make you thral andy bonde
He may not tempte you ouyr your might
For criſt Wol be your champiouy andy knyght
And pray that the ſompnour hym repente
Of his myſdedis or that the deuyl hym hent

Here endith the Freris tale.
And begynnyth the Sompnours prologh.

THis Sompnour in his stirop high stoody
Up on this frere his herte Was so Woody
That lik an aspin leef he quook for yre
Lordingis quod he o thing I desire
I you beseche of your curtesye
Sithe ye haue herdy this fals frere lye
As suffrith me I may a tale telle
This frere bostith that he knowith helle
And ody Woot that is litil Wonder
Freris and fendis been but litil a sunder
For parde ye haue ofte tyme herdy telle
How that a frere rauysshedy Was to helle
In spirit onys he auysioun
And as an aungil ledde hym by and doun
To shelbe hym the prayntes that Were there
In al the place saw he not a frere
Of othir folk he saw ynowe in Wo
Unto this aungil spak this frere tho
Now sire quod he haue freris suche a grace
That non of hem shal come in this place
Yes quod the aungel many a myllioun
And Unto Sathanas he lade hym a doun
And now hath Sathanas suche a tayl
Brader than of a Carik is the sayl
Holdy by thy tayl thou Sathanas quod he
Shew forth thyn ars and let the frere se
Where is the nest of Freris in this place

And er that a furlong wey of space
Right so as bees swarme out of an hyue
Out of the deuelis ars they gon dryue
Twenty thousandy freris on a route
And thrugh out helle swarmedy al aboute
And cam ayeen as faste as they may goon
And in to his ars they crepte in euerichon
He clippidy ayeen his tayl andy lay stylle
This frere when he lokidy hady his wille
Up on the tormentis of this sory place
His spirit gody restoridy of his grace
Unto his body ayeen andy he awook
But natheles for feer yet he quok
So was the deuyl ay in his mynde
Thay is it his heritage of verey kynde
Gody saue you alle saue this cursidy frere
My prology wil I ende in this manere

Here endith the prology. And
begynneth the Sompnours tale.

Lordingis qdy he in yorkshire as I gesse
Is a mersh contre that callidy is holdernes
In whiche ther wente a lymytour aboute
To preche andy eke to begge it is no doute
And so be fyl that on aday this frere
Hadde prechidy in a chirche in his manere
And specially abouen euery thingy
Exortidy he the pepil in his prechinge
To trentalis andy to yeue for goddis sake
Where with men mighte holy housis make

There as ony scrupse is honourid
Nat there it is Wastid and ouurid
Ne there it nedith not to be payn
As to possessioners that mowe lyuyn
Thankid be god in Wele and habundaunce
Trentals sayd he deliuereyn from penaunce
Here frendis soulis as Wel olde as yongh
Ye Whan they be so hastely y songh
Not forto holde a prest Joly and gay
He syngeth but o masse on a day
Deliuereth out anon quod he the soulis
Ful hard it is With flesh hook and oulis
To leen J clawed / or to bremme or bake
Nowe spede you hastely for cristis sake
And Whan this frere had said his entent
With qui cum patre / forth his Wey he Went
Whan folk in the chirche had yeue What hem lest
He Wente his Wey no lenger Wolde he rest
With skippe and tippid staf y tukkid hye
In euery mannys hous he gan to poure and prye
And beggid mele or chese or ellis corn
His felaw hadde a staf J tippid With horn
A peyre of tablis of clene yuory
And a poyntel y polysshed fetously
And Wroot the namys alWey as he stood
Of alle the folk that yaf hym ony good
Askaunce that he Wolde for hem praye
Yeue bs a bussel Whete mele or reye
A goddis kichil or a crip of chese

Or ellis What you liſt I may not cheſe
A goddis half peny or a maſſe peny
Or yeue vs of your brawn yf ye haue ony
A dagget of your blanket leue dame
Our ſuſtir dere lo here I Wryte your name
Bacon or cheſe or ſuche thingis as ye fynde
A ſturdy harlot Wente hym ay behynde
That Was hir oſte and euer he haar a ſak
And What men yaf hym leyde it on his bak
And Whan he Was oute atte doze anoon
He planedy alwey the namys euerichon
That he beforn hadde Wryte in his tablis
He ſeruyd hem With nyſſlis and With fablis
Nay there thou lieſt Sompnour quod the frere
Pees quod our oſt for cristis modir dere
Tel forth thy tale and ſpare it nat at al
So thryue I quod the ſompnour ſo I ſhal
So longe he Wente from hous to hous til he
Cam to an hous there he Was Wont to be
Refreſſhyd more than in an hundrid placis
Seke lay the goody man Whoos the place is
Bedrede vp on a bench lowe he lay
Deus hic quod he O Thomas goody day
Sayde this frere curteſly and ſwe
Thomas goy yelde you ful ofte tyme quod he
I haue on this bench I fare ful Weel
Here haue I etyn many a mery meel
And fro the benche he droof a Wey the cat
And leyde a doun his potent and his hat

And eke his skrippe and sette hym softe a doun
His felaw was walkid in to the toun
Forth with his knaue in to that osterye
Where as he shoop hym that might to ly
O dere maister sayde this sik man
Holde haue ye faryn syn marche began
I salde you nat this fourtenyght ne moze
Gode woot quod he labourid haue I ful sore
And specially for thy saluacion
Haue y said many a precious orison
And for our othir frendis gode hem blesse
I haue this day be at your chirche at messe
And said a sermon to my lewde wit
Nat after the playn text of holy wryt
For it is hard to you as I suppose
And therfore telle I you al the glose
Glosinge is a ful glorious thing certeyn
For lettir sleth as we clerkis seyn
There haue I taught hem to be charitable
And spende her goode there it is resonable
And ther I salde our dame where is she
Yonder in the yerde I trowe that she be
Said this man and she wol come anon
Ey maister wel com be ye by saint John
Sayde this wyf holde fare ye hertely
This frere arisith vp ful oriously
And here embraseth in his armys narowe
And kisseth here swete & chirkith as a sparowe
With his lippis/dame quod he right weel

As he that is your seruaunt euerideel
Thankith he god that yaf you soule & lyf
Yet salle I nat to day so fair a wyf
In al the chirche so god saue me
Ye god amende the fantis sir quod she
Algatis welcome ye be by my fey
Gramercy dame that haue I founde alwey
But of your grete goodnesse be your leue
I wolde praye you that ye you not greue
I wol with Thomas speke a litil word
Thyse Curatouris hey not worth a tord
To gropen tenderly a mannys conscience
In shrifte and in preching is my diligence
And study on petris wordis and poulis
I walke aboute and clense mennys sowlis
To yelde Jhesu crist his proper rent
To sprede his wordis is al myn entent
Nowe be your leue dere sire quod she
Chidith hym wel for saint charite
He is ay angry as is a pissemyre
Though that he haue al that he can desire
Though I hym wrye and make hym warm
And ouer hym ley my legh and myn arm
He gronyth lik our boor lith in our sty
Other disport of hym right noon haue I
I may not plese hym in no maner caas
O Thomas Je rous dy Thomas Thomas
This makith the fendy this most be amendid
Ire is a thing that holy god offendith

And ther of wol I speke a word or two
Now maister quod the wyf or that ye go
What wyl ye dyne I wol go ther about
Now dame quod he Je vous dy sanns doute
Haue I of a Capon but the lyuer
And of your whyte breed but a shyuyr
And after that a rosted piggis hed
But y ne wolde for me that no beest were ded
Thay hadde I with you hoolly sufficsaunce
I am a man of litil sustenaunce
My spirit hath his fosterynge in the bibyl
My body is ay so redy and so penyble
To make that my body is ful destroied
I pray you dame that ye be not annoied
Though I you my counsel so frendly shewe
Be god I nolde haue told it but a fewe
And sire quod she but o word or I goo
My child is ded with ynne this wolkis two
Sone after that ye wente out of this toun
His deth saw I be reuelacioun
Sayde this frere at hoom in our dortoure
I dar wel say that with ynne half anhoure
After his deth I saw hym bore to blis
In myn visioun so god my soule wis
So dede our Sexten and our fermerer
That haue be twelue freris this yl yeer
They may now god ethanked of his loue
Makyn her Jubilee and walkyn al aboue
And vp I wos/and al our conent eek

With many a teer trillyngh on my cheek
Withouten noyse and clateringh of bellis
Te deum was our songh and no thingh ellis
Sone aftir to crist I bad ay holy orisoun
Thankynge hym of my goodh reuelacioun
For sire and dame trustith me right weel
Our orisons been moze effectuel
And moze we se of cristis secret thingis
Than borel pepil al be they kyngis
We lyue in penslfnesse and in abstinence
And borel folk in riches and dispence
Of mete and drynke and in foul delyte
We haue the worldis lust al in despit
Lazar and diues liueden ful diuersly
And diuers guerdoms had they ther by
Who so wol praye muste faste and be clene
And fatte his soule and make his body lene
We fare as saith the Apostil cloth and foodh
Suffisith vs though they be not ful goodh
The clemesse and the fastynge of vs freris
Makith that crist exceptith our praieris
Lo moyses .vl. daies and .vl. nyght
Fastid or that godh ful of his myght
Spak with hym in the mount Synay
With empty wombe of fastynge many a day
There receyued he the lawe that was writyn
With goddis fynger and Ely wel ye wetyn
In the mounte Oreb or he hade ony speche
With high godh that is our lyuys leche

The fastidy longe andy Was in contemplance
Aaroy that hadde the tempil in gouernaunce
Andy eke the othir prestis euerichon
Into the tempil Whay they sholde goon
To prayen for the peppl andy do seruise
They nolde drynke in no maner Wyse
No drynke that mighte hem dronke make
But there in abstinence to praye andy Wake
Lest that they deyden take hede What I say
But they be sober that for the peppl pray
Ware that I say for it ynoW sufficith
Our lordy Jesu as holi Writ deuisith
Yaf vs ensampyl of fastinge andy praieris
Therfore We mendicantis We poure freris
Been Weddidy to pouerte andy to continence
To charite humbilnes andy pacience
To persecucion for euery rightWisnes
To Wepingy misericordy andy to clemnes
Andy therfore moWe ye se that our praiers
I speke of vs We mendicaunt freris
Be to the high gody more exceptable
Than youris With your festis at your tabyl
Fro Paradis first yf I shal not lye
Was may out chastidy for his glotenye
Andy cast Was out to labour certeyn
But herkey noW Thomas What I shal sayn
I haue no text of it as I suppose
But I fynde a maner thingy of a glose
That specially our sWete lordy Jhesus

Spak this by freris whan he sayde thus
Blissid ben they that poure in spiryt been
And so forth al the gospel mowe ye seen
Whethir it be liker to our professioun
Or heris that swymmen in possessioun
Fye on her poompe and her glotenye
And of her lewdnesse I hem deffye
Me thynketh they be lik to Jomman
Fat as a whale and walke lik a swan
Al violent as a botel in the spence
Her praier is of ful litil reuerence
When they for soulis say the psalme of Dauid
Lo buf they sey Cor meum eructauit
Who so lolwith cristis gospel and his lore
But we that humble be chast and pore
Workars of goddis wordis & nat auditours
Therfore right as an hauk vp on his fours
Vp springith in to the eyr so praieris
Of charitable and chast freris
Makyn hem sowne to goddis eris two
Thomas Thomas so moot I ryde or go
And by that lord that clepid was saint Jue
Me thou our brother were sholdist ÿ neuer thryue
In our chapitre praye we bothe day and nyght
To crist to sende the bothe hele and myght
Thy body forto welden ful hastely
God woot quod he no thing ther of fele I
As helpe me god as m selfe yeris
Haue I spendid on many diuers freris

Ful many apoundy yet fare J neuer the let
Certeyn my goody haue J almoſt beſet
Farwel my goldy foz it is al a go
The frere anſwerdy o Thomas doſt thou ſo
What nedith the dyuers freris foz to ſeche
What nedith hym that hath a parfyt leche
To ſechen othir lechis in ony bouy
Your ímconſtaunce is your confuſiouy
Holdy ye thay me andy elle al our couent
To preye foz you be not ſufficient
Thomas that iape is not worth a myte
Youz maladye is foz we haue to lyte
Andy yeue that couent four andy twenty grotis
Andy yeue that couent half a quartir otis
Andy yeue that frere a peny andy let hym go
Nay nay Thomas it may no thímgy be ſo
What is a ferthímgy worth partidy oy twelue
Lo eche thímgy that is onydy ím hym ſelue
Is moze ſtrongy thay what it is ſkateridy
Thomas of me thou ſhalt not be ſkateridy
Thou woldiſt haue our labour al foz nought
The high gody that al this worlde hath wrought
Saith that the workman is worthy his hire
Thomas of your treſour nought wol J deſire
As foz my ſelf but that our Couent
To praye foz you be ay ſo diligent
Andy foz to holde vp criſtis olbey chirche
Thomas yf ye wol lerne foz to wirche
Of bildynge vpon chirchis molb ye fynde

Yf it be goody̓ in Thomas lif of yndę
Ye lyen here ful of angir andy̓ of yre
With Whiche the deuyl set your herte on fire
Andy̓ chidey̓ here the holy Jnocent
Your Wyf that is here so meke andy̓ so pacient
Andy̓ therfore Thomas trowb me yf thou list
Ne strynę not With thy Wyf as for the best
Andy̓ here thyse Wordy̓ abey nowb be thy faith
Touchiṅgy̓ such thiṅgy̓. lo What the Wyse saith
With ynne thy hous ne be thou no tiraṅy
To thy subiectis do thou noon oppressyon
Ne make thyn acqueyntaunce not to fle
Andy̓ Thomas yet eft sones Warne J the
Be War of her that in thy bosom slepith
Ware fro the serpent that so slily crepith
Vndir the gras andy̓ styngeth ful subtilly
Be War of her andy̓ herkyn paciently
That tWenti thousandy̓ meyn haue lost her lyuys
For striuyngy̓ With her lemmans & her Wyuys
Nowb syn ye haue so holy a meke Wyf
What nedith you Thomas to make stryf
Ther nys iWys no serpent so cruell
Whan a may tredith vpon his tayl ne half so fel
As a Woman is Whan she hath caught yre
Verey vengeaunce is than al her desire
Ire is a synne of the grete seuyn
Andy̓ ful abhominabil to the kyngy̓ of heuyn
Andy̓ to hym self it is a destruction
This euery lewdy̓ vicar or parsoyn

Can sey holb Ire engendrith homicide
Ire in soth is the executour of pryde
I coude of Ire say right muche sorolb
That my tale sholde laste til to morolb
Andy therfore pray I godi bothe day andy nyght
That to ay yrous may godi sende litil myght
It is gret harm andy certis gret pyte
To sette ay yrous may in high degre
Tholom ther was ay yrous potestate
Whiche hasty was in Jugement algate
Upon a day out riden knyghtis tbo
Andy as fortune wolde that it was so
That on of hem cam hoom that other didi nought
Anon the knyght before the Juge is brought
That sayde thus thou hast thy felob slayn
For whiche I deme the to the deth certayn
Andy to anothir knyght comaundedi he
Go lede hym to the deth I charge the
Andy happidi as they wentyn be the way
Towardi the place where he sholde dey
The knight cam whiche that men went hadi be dedi
They thoughte they it were the best reedi
To lede hem bothe to the Juge agayn
They saydeu lordi the knyght hath not sleyn
His felaw here he stont hool a lyue
Ye shal be dedi quod he so mot I thryue
This is to say bothe on tbo andy thre
Andy to the firste knyght right thus spak he
I dampnedi the thou most algatis be dedi

And thou also most nedis lese thyn hed
For thou art cause Why thy felaw deyeth
And to the thridde knyght right thus he seyeth
Thou hast not do that I comaundid the
And thus he did hem sle al thre
Rus Cambustus Was eek dronkelew
And ay delitid hym to be a shrew
And so befil a lord of his meyne
That loued Wel vertuous moralite
Saide on a day betwix hem self right thus
A lorde is lost yf he be aught vicious
And dronkenesse is eke a foul record
Of ony man and namely of a lorde
Ther is many an ye and many an ere
Awaytynge on a lorde he not nat Where
For goddis loue drynketh more temperatly
Wyne makith a man to lyue Wrechidly
His mynde and eek his lymys euerichon
The Peuerse shalt thou se qd he anon
And preue it be thyn owen experience
That Wyn ne doth to folk such offence
Ther is no Wyn that bereuyth me my might
Of hond of foot ne of myn yen sight
And for despit he dranke muche the more
An hundrid part than he did before
And right anon this prous cursid Wrecche
This knyghtis sone let before hym fecche
Comaundid hym he sholde before hym stonde
And sodenly he took his bolwe in honde

And vp the strengh he pulleth to his here
And with an arowe he slough the childe there
Nowe wethir haue I a siker hond or none
Quod he is al my might and mynde a goon
Hath wyn bereued me myn yen sight
What sholde I telle the answer of the knyght
His sone was sleyn ther is no more to say
Beth ware therfore with lordis for to play
Syngeth placebo and I shal yf I can
But yf it be vnto a poure man
To a poure man men sholde his vices telle
But not to a lordy though he sholde go to helle
O Jaus tarrus that strongh percien
Howe destroyde he the ryuer of gysen
For that an hors of his was dreynt ther ynne
Whan that he wente Babilon for to wynne
He made that the ryuer was so smal
That men might ride and wade ouer al
Lo what sayde he that so wel teche can
Ne be no felowe to an vrous man
Ne with no woody man walke by the way
Lest thou repente I wol no forther say
Nowe Thomas leue brother leef thyn Jre
Thou shalt me fynde as iust as a squiere
Holdy nat the deuylis knyf ay in thy herte
Thy anger doth me alto sore smerte
But shewe to me al thy confessiou
May quod the sik man be saint Symon
I haue be shriue this day of my curat

I haue hym tolde al myn hert
It nedith nomore to speke of it sayde he
But yf it list of myn humylite
Yeue me thay of thy goody to make our cloister
Sayde he for many a muskle & meny an oyster
Whey othir men haue been ful wel at ese
Haue been our foody our cloister forto reyse
Andy yet gody woot ymethe our fundement
Parfourmedy is ne of our chirche ful pament
Ther is not a tile with yme our wonys
Be gody we owe fifty pundy for stonys
Nowe help Thomas for hym that harowedy helle
Or ellis moste we our lokis selle
Andy yf men lacke our predicacion
Thay goth the worlde al to destruccion
For who so wol fro this worlde hys hereue
So gody me saue Thomas he your leue
He wolde hereue out of this worlde the somme
For who can teche andy worke as we komme
Andy that is nat of litil tyme quod he
But seth Ely was or Elyse
Haue freris be that fynde I of recordz
In charite y thankedy he our lorde
Nowe Thomas help for saint charite
Andy downy anon he sittith on his kne
This sik man wept nygh woody for yre
He wolde that the frere hadde be a fyre
With his fals dissimulacion
Suche thingis as ley in my possession

Quod he that may I yeue you and̄ non othir
Ye sey me thus holde that I am your brothir
Ye certis qd̄ the frere trustith me right wel
I took our dame our lettir and̄ our seel
Nolde wel quod he and̄ somwhat shal I yeue
Vnto your holy Couent whyle y lyue
And̄ in thy hond̄ thou shalt it haue anon̄
On this condicion and̄ othir non
That thou departe it so my dere brother
That euery frere haue as moche as othir
This shalt thou swere on thy professioun
Withoute fraude or cauillacioun
I swere it quod the frere vp on my feith
And̄ therwith al his hond̄ in his he leith
Lo here my feith in me shal be no lak
Than put thy hond̄ adoun right be my bak
Seyde this man and̄ grope wel be hynde
Be nethe my buttok there shalt thou fynde
A thynḡ that I haue hid̄ in priuyte
A thoughte this frere that shal go with me
And̄ doun his hond̄ he launchith to the clifte
In hope forto fynde there som good̄ yefte
And̄ whan this fiend̄ man felte this frere
Aboute his towel gropinge here and̄ there
Amyd̄ his hond̄ he let the frere a fart
Ther is no Capul drawynge in a Cart
That mighte haue let a fart of suche a soun
The frere vp stert as doth a wood̄ lioun
A fals chorle quod he for Cockis bonys

This hast thou in despit do for the nonys
Thou shalt a bye this fart yf that y may
His meyne With that herdyn suche aray
Com lepynge in and chasidy out the frere
And forth he goth With a ful heuy chere
And fette his felow there as lay his stoor
He lokedy as he Were a Wilde boor
And grintith With the teth so Was he Wroth
A sturdy paas doun to the court he goth
Where as ther Wonedy a man of gret honour
To Whom that he Was alWey Confessour
This Worthy man Was lordy of that Village
This frere cam as he Were in a Rage
Where as this lordy sat etyng at his borde
Ynnethe mighte the frere speke o Worde
Til atte laste he sayde gody you se
This lordy gan loke and sayde benedicite
What frere John What maner Worlde is this
I se Wel som thing ther is amys
Ye loke as though the Wode Were ful of theuys
Sit doun and tel me What your greue is
And it shal be amendid yf I may
I haue quod he had a despit to day
Gody yelde it you a doun in your Village
That in this Worlde ther nys so poure a page
That he nolde haue abhominacion
Of that I haue receyuedy in the toun
And yet it greuyth not me half so sore
As that the olde chorl With lockis hore

Blassemyd hath our holy Couent eke
Now maister quod the lordy I you beseke
No maister sir quod he but seruitour
Though y haue hady in scole that honour
Gody likith not that raby men hs calle
Nothir in market ne in our large halle
Ne fors quod he but tel me al your greef
Sir quod this frere m odious myschief
This day be tydy is myn ordre andy me
And so p consequens in eche degre
Of holy chirche gody amende it sone
Sir quod the lordy ye Woot What is to done
Distempere you not ye be my confessour
Ye be the salt of the erthe andy the sauour
For goddis loue your pacience now holdy
Tel me your greef andy he anon hym toldy
As ye haue herdy beforne ye Woot Wel What
The lady of the hous ay stylle sat
Til she hade herdy What the frere sayde
Ey goddis moder quod she the blissidy mayde
Is ther aught ellis tel me feithfully
Madame quod he how thinke ye ther by
How that me thinkith quod she so gody me spede
I say a chorl hath do a chorlis dede
What shold y say gody let hym neuer the
His silk hedy is ful of vanite
I holde hym in a maner of a fransy
Madame quod he be gody I shal not lye
But I in ony Wyse may oy hym a Wreke

I schal diffame hym ouer al where y speke
That fals blasfemur that chargid me
To parte that wol not departid be
To euery ylike moche with myschaunce
The lordy sat stille as he were in a traunce
And in his herte he rollid up and down
Holw that this chorle had dilectacion
To shelwe suche a probleme to the frere
Neuer erst to nolw herde I of suche a matere
I trolw the deuyl put it in his mynde
In ars metrik schal ther noman fynde
Beforn this day of suche a questioun
Who sholde make a demonstracion
That euery man sholde haue lik his part
As of a soun or of a souour of a fart
O nyce prolwdy chorle I shrewe his face
Lo sirs quod the lordy with hardy grace
To euery y like tel me holw
That a fart sholde be departid nolw
Hit is an impossible it may not be
Ey nyce chorle godys lete hym neuer the
The wombling of a fart and euery soun
Nys but of ayer reuerberacioun
And there it wastith litil and litil alwey
Ther is noman can deme be my fey
Yf that it were departid equally
What lo this chorle lo holw shrewdly
Unto my confessour to day he spak
I holde hym certayn a demonyak

Now ete your mete and let the chorl go pley
Lete hym go hange hym self a deuyl wey
Now stoody the lordis squier at his bordy
That carf his mete and herde wordy be wordy
Of al this thingy of whiche I haue you saidy
My lordy quod he be not euyl a paydy
For I oude telle for a golbne cloth
To you sire freere so that ye be not wroth
How that this fart sholde auyn deliby be
Among your ouent yf it like sithee
Tel quod the lordy and thou shalt haue anon
A golbne cloth be gody and be seynt Johy
My lordy quod he whey that the wedir is fair
Right here before you sittyng in a chair
Let bringe a carte whele right in to this halle
But so that it haue his spokis alle
Xij. spokis hath a carte whele comynly
And bringy me. xij. freris woot ye why
For. viij. is a ouent as I gesse
Your confessour here for his wordynesse
Shal parfourme vp the noumbir of his ouent
Thay shul they knele douy by one assent
And to euery spokis ende in this manere
Ful sadly ley his nose shal a frere
Your nobyl confessour ther gody hym saue
Shal holde his nose vpright vnder the naue
Thay shal this chorle with hely styf & tought
As ony tabour hider be y brought
And set hym on the wheel right of this cart

Vp oy the naue andy make hym lete a fart
And ye shul se vp peril of my lif
The preef Whiche that is demonstratif
That equally the soundy of it Wol Wende
And eke the stynk out at the spokis ende
Saue that this Worthy man your confessour
Be cause he is a man of gret honour
Shal haue the firste fruyt as reson is
The nobil vsage of freris yet it is
The Worthieste man of theym shal first be seruidy
And certeinly he hath it Weel deseruidy
He hath to day taught vs so muche goody
With prechinge in the pulpet there he stoody
That I may Voucheseuf I say for me
He hadde the firste smel of fartis thre
And so Wolde al his couent hardely
He breith hym so faire and so holily
The lordy the lady andy eche may saue the frere
Saydе that Jankyn spak in this matere
As Wel as Ouyde or Ptholome
Tolbechingy the chorlis they saydе subtilite
And hy Wyt madе hym speke as he spak
He nys no fool ne demonak
And Jankyn hath y Wonne a nelbe golbne
My tale is doyn We be almost at Toune

Here begynneth the prology
of the clerk of Oxenfordy.

Sir clerk of Oxenfordy our ost sayde
Ye ayde as quoy e stille as doth a mayde

Were nelh sponsidy sittyngy at the bordy
This day herde J of your tunge no wordy
J trolbe ye stody aboute som sophyme
But Salamon sayde euery thimgy hath tyme
For goddis sake be of goody chere
It is no tyme nolh to stody here
Tel bs som mery tale be your fey
For what may is entridy in to a pley
He nedis moot in to the pley assente
But prechith not as freris do in lente
To make bs for our oldy symmys wepe
Ne that thy tale make bs not to slepe
Tel bs som mery thimgy of auenturis
Your termys your colours andy your figuris
Kepe hem in store til so be that ye endite
High style is when men to kyngis wryte
Spekith so playn at this tyme J you pray
That we may vnderstonde what ye say
This worthy clerk benignely answerde
Ost quod he J am vnder your yerde
Ye haue of bs as nolh the gouernaunce
Andy therfore J shal do your obeysaunce
As fer as reson askith hardely
J wol you telle a tale whiche that J
Lernydy at padolh of a worthy clerk
As prayndy is he his wordis andy his work
He is nolh dedy andy leydy in cheste
J pray to godi yeue hys soule goode reste
Fraunceys petrark the laureat poete

Highte this clerk whoos rethorik swete
Enlumyned al Itayle of poetrie
As Lucane did of philosophie
Or lalbe or other art particuler
But deth that wol not suffre hs to duelle here
But as it were the twynkelyng of an ye
Hem both hath slayn and alle shal we dye
But forth to telle of this worthy man
That taughte me this tale as I began
He first with high stile enditith
Er he the dite of his tale writith
A probleme in whiche discriueth he
Pemounte and of Saluces the contre
And spekyn of arpentyn the hilles hye
That keep the boundes of west lumbardye
And of mount vesulus in special
Where that the po out of the welle smal
Takyng his first sprynginge and his cours
That estward euer encreseth in his cours
To emeli ward to Ferrare and vemise
The whiche a long thing were to deuyse
And trewly as to my Iugement
Me thinkith it a thing impertinent
Saue that he wol conueye his matere
But thus he begynneth his tale as ye mow here

¶ Here endith the prologh. And
¶ begynneth the clerkis tale of Oxenforde

THer was in the west side of Itayle
Doun at the foote of vesulus the colde

A lusty playn habundaunt of vitayl
Where many a toun and tour thou maist beholde
That founded were in tyme of fadris old
And many another delectabyl sight
And saluces this noble contre hight
A Markys somtyme lord was of that lond
As were his worthy eldris hym before
And obeysaunt ay redy to his hond
Were alle his lieges both lasse and more
Thus in delyt he lyuyd and hath do yore
Beloued & drad thorugh fauouris of fortune
Both of his lordis and eke of his comune
Therwith he was to speke of lynage
The gentilest baron of lumbardye
A fair persone a strong and yong of age
And ful of honoure and of curtesye
Discret ynow his contre forto gye
Saue in som thingis he was to blame
And Waltir was this yonge lordis name
I blame hym thus that he considerid not
In tyme comynge what mighte hym betyde
But on his lust present was al his thought
As forto hauke and hunte on euery syde
Wel nygh alle other curis lete he slyde
And eke he nolde and that was worst of al
Wedde no wyf for aught that mighte be fal
Only that poynt his pepyl huar so sore
That flokmele on a day they to hym went
And one of hem that wisest was of lore

Or ellis that the lordy Wolde best assent
That he sholde telle hym What his peple ment
Or ellis coude he shelde Wel such matere
The to the Markis sayde as ye shul here
O nobil Markis your humanite
Assurith vs and yeueth vs hardines
As ofte as tyme is of necessite
That We to you molde telle our heuynes
Acceptith nolde lordy of your gentilnes
That We With pitous here come to compleyne
And lete your eris not my vois disdaigne
Al haue I not to doon in this matere
More than another may hath in this place
Yet for as muche as ye my lordy so dere
Haue alwey shewdy me fauour and grace
I dar the better aske of you a space
Of audience to shelde our requeste
And ye my lordy to do as you leste
For certis lordy so Wel vs liketh yolde
And al your Werk that ye haue doon and We
Ne coude not our self deuisyn holde
We mighte lyuyn in more felicite
Saue o thingy lordy yf your Wille be
That forto be a Weddidy may yf that ye leste
Then Were your pepyl in souereyn hertis reste
Holde ye your hedy vnder the blisful yok
Of souereynte and not of seruise
Whiche that men clepith spousayle or Wedlok
And thynkith lordy among your Wittis Wyse

Holde that our daies passen in sondry wyse
For though we slepe or wake renne or ryde
Ay fleyth the tyme it wol noman abyde
And though your grene yongthe flowre as yet
In crepith age as stylle as ony stoon
And deth manasseth euer age and smyte
In eche astate for ther escapith noon
And also certayn as we knowe echon
That we shul dye and vncertayn we alle
Been of the day when deth shal on vs falle
Acceptith than of vs the trewe entent
That yet neuer refuseden your heste
And we wol lordy yf ye wol assent
Chese you a wyf in short tyme atte leste
Wyth of the gentilleste and of the meste
Of al this londe so that it oughte seme
Honour to godd and you as I can deme
Deliuer vs out of al this hevy drede
And take a wyf for high goddis sake
For yf so be it befalle as godd forbede
That throwh your deth your lyf sholde slake
And that a straunge successour sholde it take
Your heritage o wo were vs on lyue
Wherfore we pray you hastely to wyue
Here meke prayer and here meke chere
Made the Markis herte forto haue pyte
Ye wol quod he myn owen peple dere
To that I neuer erst thoughte constreyne me
I me reioysid in my liberte

That selde tyme is founde in mariage
There I was fre I muste be in seruage
But natheles I se your treWe entent
And truste vpon your Wit and haue woN ay
Wherfore of my fre Wil I Wil assent
To Wedde me as sone as euer y may
But ther as ye haue profridN me to day
To chese me a Wyf I you releue
That chois and pray you of your profir seue
For godN it Woot that childrYN ofte been
Unlik her Worthy eldris hem before
Beaute comyth al of godN not of the streen
Of Whiche they be gendridN and y bore
I truste in godN and euer haue do by fore
My mariage and myN astate and reste
I hym betake he may do as hym leste
Lete me allone in chesingN of my Wyf
That charge vpon my bak y Wol endure
But I you pray and charge vpoN your lif
What Wyf that y take that ye me ensure
To Worshipe her Whylis her lif may dure
In WorN and Werk bothe here & eueri Where
As she an Emperours doughter Were
And ferthermore this shal ye sWere that ye
Ayenst my chois shal ye neuer stryue
For sith I shal forgo my liberte
At your requeste as euer mot I thriue
There as my herte is set there Wol y Wyue
And but ye Wol assente in such maner

I pray you ſpekith nomore of this matere
With herty wyl they ſwoꝛyn and aſſentyn
To al this thing ther ſayde no wight nay
Beſekyng hym of grace or that they wentyn
That he wolde graunte hem a certayn day
Of his ſponſayll as ſone as euer he may
For yet alwey many of the pepyl dredde
Leſt the Markis wolde no wyf wedde
He grauntid hem a day ſuche as hym leſt
Oy whiche he wolde be wedded ſikirly
And ſayde he did al this at hir requeſt
And they with humble entent buxomly
Knelingh vp on her knees ful reuerently
Hym thankid alle and thus they haue an ende
Of here entent and hom ayeen they wende
And here vp on he took his officers
And comaundid for the feſte purueye
And to his pryue knyghtis and ſquieris
Suche charge yaf as hym liſt on hem leye
And they to his comaundement obeye
And eche of hem doth al his diligence
To do vnto that feſte high reuerence

¶ Prima pars Griſildis.

Nought fer fro that paleis honourable
There as this Markis shoop his mariage
Ther stood a thorp of sighte ful delectable
In whiche that poure folk of that village
Hadden her beſtis and her herbigage
And of her labour took hir ſuſtenaunce

Aftir that the erthe yaf hem habundaunce
Among these poure men ther duellid a man
Whiche was y holde pourest of alle
But high god sometyme sende can
Into a litil oyes stalle
Janycola men of that throwpe hym calle
A doughter hadde he fair ynough to sight
And Grisilde this yonge maiden hight
Forto speke of vertu and of honest beaute
Thay was she on of the faireste vnder sonne
And ful pouerly y fostrid vp was she
No likorous lust was thorou her hert y ronne
But ofter of the welle than of the wyn tonne
She drank and for she wolde vertu plese
Hit was hir list and hir most ese
But though this mayde so tendir were of age
Yet in the brest of hir virginite
Ther was y closid ripe and sad corage
And in gret reuerence and charite
Her olde poure fader fostrid she
A felwe sheep spynnynge on feld she kepte
She wolde not be ydil til she slepte
And whan she homward com she wolde brynge
Wortis or othir herbis tymes ofte
The whiche she setheth for hir lyuynge
And made her bed harde and nothyng softe
And ay she kepte her fadres lif on lofte
With obeysaunce and diligence
That child might do to the fadris reuerence

Vp on Grisilde this poure creature
Fil of this Markis he cast his ye
As he wode on huntynge pauenture
And when it he fyl that he mighte here aspye
He not With Wantoun lokynge of folye
His yen cast on hir but in sadnesse
Vp on her chere he Wolde hym ofte auyse
Comendynge in his herte her Womanhede
And eke her vertu passynge ony Wight
Of so yonge age as Wel in chere as dede
For though the peple had no gret insight
He considered in vertu ful right
Her beaute and disposid hym that he Wolde
Wedde her only yf he euer Wedde sholde
The day of Weddynge cam but no Wight can
Telle What maner Woman it sholde be
For Whiche meruayl Wondrid many a man
And sayde When they Were in priuyte
Wol our lorde lyue yet in Vanite
Wol he not Wedde allas the Whyle
Why Wol he hym self and vs begyle
But natheles this Markis had do make
Of gemmys set in gold and in asure
Broches and ringis for grisildis sake
And to her clothinge took the mesure
Of a mayde lik vnto her stature
And eke of her other ornamentis alle
That vnto suche a Weddinge sholde be falle
The tyme of vndrin on the same day

Approchidȝ that the Weddinge ſholde be
Andȝ al the Paleis put Was in aray
Both halle andȝ chambȝis ech in his degre
Houſis of office ſtuffidȝ With greet plente
There maiſt thou ſe of deyntеous Vitaylle
That may refoundeȝ as for as laſtith Itayle
This ryal Markis richely araidȝ
Lordis andȝ ladies in his companye
The Whiche that to the feſte Were praidȝ
Andȝ of his retenu the bachelrye
With many a ſolȝ of ſundrȝ melodye
Vnto the Vilage of Whiche I tolde
In this aray the right Wey they holde
Griſilde of this godȝ Woot ful Innocent
That for her ſhapyn Was al this aray
To fette Watir atte Welle is ſhe Went
Andȝ comyth hoom as ſone as euer ſhe may
For Wel ſhe herde ſay that ilke day
That the Markis ſholde Wedde & yf ſhe mighte
She Wolde fayne haue ſeyn ſom of that ſighte
She thoughte ſhe Wolde With othir maidens ſtonde
That keen my felowes in our doȝe andȝ ſe
The Markeſſe andȝ therfore Wol I fonde
To doȝ at hoom as ſone as it may be
The labour Whiche longeth to me
Andȝ than y may at leyſer here beholde
Yf ſhe this Wey Vnto the caſtel holde
Andȝ as ſhe Wolde ouer the threſſholdȝ gooȝ
The Markis cam andȝ gan her forto calle

And̄ ſhe ſet doun̄ hir Watir pot anone
Beſidis the threſhold̄ in an oxis ſtalle
And̄ doun̄ vp on hir knees ſhe gan to falle
And̄ With ſad̄ contenaunce kneliđ̄ ſtylle
Til ſhe hadde herd̄ What Was the lord̄is Wille
This thoughtful Markis ſpak vnto the mayde
Ful ſobirly and̄ ſayde in this manere
Where is your fadir o Griſildis he ſayde
And̄ ſhe With reuerence and̄ humble chere
AnſWerde lord̄ he is al redy here
And̄ in ſhe goth Withouten lengir let
And̄ to the Markis ſhe hir fader fet
He by the hond̄ than took this olde man
And̄ ſayde thus When he had̄ hym a ſyde
Janycula J ne may ne J ne can
The pleſaunce lenger of my herte hyde
Yf that thou Vouchefauf that ſo betyde
Thy doughter Wol J take or that J Wende
As to my Wyf vnto our lyuys ende
Thow loueſt me J Woot it Wel certayn
And̄ art my feithful liege man bore
And̄ al that likith me J dar Wel ſayn
Jt likith the and̄ ſpecially therfore
Tel me that point that J ſayde before
And̄ yf thou Wolt vnto that purpos draWe
To take me as for thy ſone in laWe
This ſodeyn caas this man Was ſtoned̄ ſo
That reed̄ he Weyt abaſſhid̄ and̄ al quakynḡ
He ſtood̄ Wmethe ſayde he Wordis mo

But only thus lordy quod he my Willynge
Ys as ye Wil nat ageyns your likynge
I Wol no thyngy / ye be my lordy so dere
Right as you list gouernyth this matere
Yet Wol I quod this Markis softely
That in your chambir I ye and she
Haue a collacion and Wotist thou Why
For I Wol axe yf it here Wil be
To be my Wyf and reule her aftir me
And al this shal be do in thy presence
I nyl not speke out of thyn audience
And in the Chambir Whyle they Were aboute
Her tretees Whiche ye shal as after here
The peppl cam in to the hous al Withoute
And Wondrid hem in hoW honest manere
And she so tentifly kepte her fader dere
But bitterly Grisilde Wonde mighte
For neuer erst saW she such a sighte
No Wonder it Was though she Were stoned
To se so greet a gest come in that place
She neuer Was to suche gestis y Woned
For Whiche she lokid With ful pal face
But shortly this mater forto chace
These ben the Wordis that the Markis sayde
To this Kery benigne feithful mayde
Grisilde he sayde ye shulle Wel Vnderstonde
It likith Vnto your fader and Vnto me
That I you Wedde and eke it may so stonde
As I suppose that ye Wil that it so be

But thyse demaundis aye I first quod he
That sith it shal be doon in hasty wyse
Wol ye assent or ellis you auyse
I say thus be ye redy With goody herte
To al my lust andy that I frely may
As me best thinkith though ye lawghe or smerte
Andy neuer ye to gruche nyght ne day
Whan I say ye that ye say not ones nay
Nothir be wordy ne by frowbnyngy contenance
Sweere this andy I you here assure affiaunce
Wondrynge vp on thyse wordis wonderly for drede
She sayde lordy indigne andy vnworthy
I am to suche honour as ye me bede
But as ye wil your self right so wil I
Andy here I swere that neuer willyngly
In wordy or thought I wol you disobeye
Forto be dedy thogh me were loth to deye
This is ynough Grisilde myn quod he
Andy forth he goth With a ful sobir chere
Out atte dore andy after cam she
Andy to the peepl he sayde in this manere
This is my wyf quod he that stondeth here
Honourith her andy louith her I you pray
Who so me louith ther is no more to say
Andy for that no thingy of her olde geer
She sholde bringe in to his hous he bady
That women sholde dispoyle here there
Of Whiche these ladyes were not ful glady
To handel her clothis where in she was cladd

But natheles this mayde bright of hewe
Fro foot to hedy they clothidy her newe
Her heris they kempt that lay vntressidy
Ful tidely andy with her fyngris smale
A croune on her hedy they haue y dressidy
Andy set hir ful of owches grete andy smale
Of here aray what sholde I make a tale
Ymethe the pepyl her knelw for her fairnes
Whan she translatidy was in suche riches
This markis hath her spousidy with a rynghy
Wrought for the same cause andy than her set
Vp oy an hors snolw white ful wel amblyngh
Andy to his paleis or he lengir let
With ioyful pepil that her ladde andy met
Conueydy her andy thus the day they spendy
In reuel til the sonne gan descende
Andy shortly forth this tale forto chace
I say that to this newe Markesse
Ody hath suche fauour sent of his grace
That it ne semydy be no liklynes
That she was bozy andy fedy in rudenes
As in a cyte or in ay oyis stalle
But norisshedy in ay Emperours halle
To euery wight she woyey is so dere
Andy worshipful that folk there she was boze
Andy from hir birthe knelw her peer by pere
Ymethe trowidy they but onrste haue swore
That to Janyaul of whiche I spak before
She deughter was as by conecture

Hem thoughte ſhe Was anothir creature
For that euer vertuous Was ſhe
She Was encreéd in ſuche excellence
Of the Wyſe god ſet in high bounte
And ſo discreet and feir of eloquence
So benigne and digne of reuerence
And coude so the peplis hertis enbrace
That eche her loued that lokid in her face
Not only of Saluces in the toun
Publiſſhed Was the bounte of hir name
But eke beside in many a Regioun
Yf one ſayde Weſt another ſaid the ſame
So ſpredde of her bounte the name
That men and Women both yong and old
Goth to Saluces vp on her to be hold
This Walter lowly but nat rially
Wedded hath With fortunat honeſte
In goddis pees liuyth ful honeſtly
At hoom and outward grace ynough had he
And for he ſaW that vnder low degre
Was honeſt vertu hid the pepyl hym held
A prudent man and that is ſeen ful ſelde
Not only this Griſilde thorow hir Witt
Coude al the feet of Wifly humbilnes
But yet Whan that the cauſe requiryd it
The comune profit eke coude ſhe redreſſe
Ther nas diſcorde rancour ne hevyneſſe
In al the londe that ſhe it coude a pees
And Wyſely bryngе hem in reſte and pees

Thogh her husbonde were absent or none
Yf gentilmen or othir of that contre
Were wroth she wolde bryngе hem attone
So wyse and ripe wordis hadde she
And in Jugement so greet equyte
That she from heuyn sent was as men wendy
Pepil to saue and euery wrongy to amende
Nat longe tyme aftir that this Grisilde
Was weddid she a doughter hady y boze
Al hady her leuyr boze a knaue childy
Glady was the Markes and the folk therfore
For though amayde childy cam al before
She may vnto a knaue childy atteyne
Be liklihede syn che nys not bareyne

+Secunda pars+

Ther fill as it befallith ofte tyme mo
Whan ꝑ this childy hady sokyn but a throwh
This markis in his herte he thoughte so
To tempte his wyf her sadnes to knowe
That he ne mighte out of his herte athrowe
Forbere, wherfore he purposidy on a day
This maruaylous desire his wyf to assaye
He hadde assaidy here ynough ofte tyme before
And fondy her euer goody What nedith it
Her forto tempte alwey more andy more
Thogh sum may preyse it for a subtil wit
But as for me y say ful euyl it sit
To assay a wyf whan that it is no nede
Andy put her in angwish andy in drede

For which this markis wroughte in this manere
He cam a lone a nyght there as she lay
With sterne face and ryght ogly chere
And sayde thus Grisilde quod he that day
That I you took fro your poure aray
And put you in astaat of high noblesse
Ye haue not that forgotyn as I gesse
I say Grisilde the present dignite
In whiche I haue put you as I trowe
Makith you not foryetful forto be
That I you took in poure astat fullowe
For ony wel ye muste your self knowe
Take hede of euery word what I seye
Ther is no wight that herith but we tweye
Ye woot your self how that ye cam here
In to this hous it is not longe ago
And though to me ye be bothe leef and dere
Unto my gentils ye be no thyng so
They say to hem it is greet shame and woo
For to be subiect and leen in seruage
To the that bore art in so smal a vilage
And namely sith thy doughter was y bore
These wordes haue they spoken outrees
But I desire as I haue doon before
To lyue my lif with hem in reste and pees
I may not in this caas be recheles
I moot doon with thy doughter for the beste
Nat as I wolde but as my pepyl leste
And yet goon woot this is ful loth to me

But natheles Withoute your Witynge
I Wil not do but thus I Wol quod he
That ye to me assente as to this thing
Shew now your pacience in your Werkynge
That ye me highte and swore in your Village
That day that made Was our mariage
Whan she hadde herd al this she not ameuyd
Neither in Word neyther in chere ne in contenance
For as it semyd she Was not agreuyd
She saith lord al lieth in your plesaunce
My child and I With hertly obeysaunce
Been your owen and ye may bothe saue & spille
Your owen thing do ye after your Wille
Ther may be no thing so god my soule saue
Likyng to you that may displese me
Ne I desire no thing in ony Wyse to haue
Ne drede forto lese saue only ye
This Wyl is in myn herte and euer shal be
No lengthe of tyme or deth may this deface
Ne turne my corage to noon othir place
Glad Was this Markis of her answeringe
But yet it semyd as he Were not so
Al drery Was his chere and his lokyng
Whan that he sholde out of the chambir go
Sone after this a furlong Wey or two
He priuely hath told al his entent
Unto a man and to his Wyf hym sent
A maner of a sergeaunt Was this priuy man
The Whiche that feithful ofty founde had

In thingis grete and eke ſuche folk wel can
Done execucioun in thingis ſadde
The lordy knelb weel that he hym loudy & dradn
And when this ſeriaunt wiſte his lordis wyl
In to the chambir he ſtalkidy hym ful ſtylle
Madame he ſayde ye moot forgeue it me
Though I do thingy whiche I am conſtreyned
Ye be ful wyſe and ful wel knowe ye
That lordis heſtis may nat be ſtayned
They may weel be bewaylidy or compleyned
But men muſte nede vnto her luſt obeye
And ſo wol I ther is nomore to ſey
This childy I am comandidy forto take
And ſpak nomore but out the childy he hent
Diſpitouſly & gan a cheere ful hidous to make
As though he wolde haue ſleyn it or he went
Greſilde muſte al ſuffre and conſent
And as a lamb ſhe ſittith meke and ſtylle
And lete this cruel ſeriaunt do his wylle
Suſpecions was the fame of this man
Suſpect his face ſuſpect his wordy alſo
Suſpect the tyme in whiche he this began
Allas her doughter that ſhe louydy ſo
She wende he wolde haue ſleyn it tho
But natheles ſhe neyther wepte ne ſikedy
Conformydy to that the Markis likidy
But at the laſte ſpeke to hemme ſhe began
And mekely ſhe to the ſeriaunt prayde
So as he was a verray gentilman

That ſhe muſte hir childy kiſſe onys or it deide
And in her arme ſhe the litil childy leyde
With ful ſady face and gay the childy to blis
And lullidy it and aftir gay it kiſſe
And thus ſhe ſayde in her benigne vois
Farwel my childy J ſchal the neuer ſe
But ſith J haue the markidy with the holy crois
Of thilke fader blyſſedy moot thou be
That for vs deide vpon the cros of tre
Thy ſoule litil childy J hym betake
For this nyght ſchalt thou dye for my ſake
J trowe that to a norice in this caas
It hadde be greete rowthe for to ſe
Wel mighte a moder than haue cride allas
But natheles ſo ſady and ſo ſtedfaſt was ſhe
That ſhe enduridy al aduerſite
And to the ſeriaunt mekely ſhe ſayde
Haue here agayn your litil yongh mayde
Gooth nowe quod ſhe and doth my lordis heſte
But o thingh wol J pray you of your grace
That but my lorde forbady it you atte leſte
Burieth this litil body in ſom place
That beſtis ne foulis it to raſe
But he to that purpos no word wolde ſay
But toke the childe and wente vp on his way
This ſeriaunt cam to the lordy agayn
And of Gaſildis wordis and of her chere
He tolde hym poynt by poynt ſhort and pleyn
And hym preſentidy with his doughter dere

Sumwhat this lordy hath wolwyle in his maneve
But natheles his purpos heldy he ſtylle
As lordis doon whan they wyl haue her wylle
Andy bady his ſeriaunt that he priuely
Sholde the childy ſofte wynde andy wrappe
With al the circumſtaunce tendirly
Andy carye it in a cofir or in a lappe
But on peyne of his hedy of forto ſwappe
That noman ſholde knowe of this entent
Ne whens it cam ne whithir that it went
But at boleyn to his ſuſtir deve
That ilke tyme of Pauye was Countes
He ſholde it take andy ſhewe hir this matere
Beſekyngy here to doyer beſineſſe
This childy to foſtir in alle gentilnes
Andy whoos childy that it is he bady hym hyde
From euery wight for aught that may betyde
The ſeriaunt goth & hath fulfilledy this thingy
But to this Markis now retorne we
Ful nowe goth he ful faſte Imagenynge
Yf he his wyues chere he mighte ſe
Or by her wordy perceyue that ſhe
Were chaungidy but neuer yet coude he fynde
But euer in oy like ſady andy kynde
As glady as humbil as beſy in ſeruiſe
Andy eke in loue as ſhe was wont to be
Was ſhe to hym in euery maner wyſe
Ne of hir doughter not oo worday ſpak ſhe
Noy accident for noy aduerſite

Was seyn in her ne neuer her doughter name
Ne nempned she in erneste ne in game

¶ Tercia pars.

IN this astat ther past be four yeer
Er she With childe Was but as gon Wolde
A mayd childe she haar be this Walter
Ful gracious and feir forto beholde
And Whan that folk it to his fadir tolde
Nat only he but al his contre mery
Was for this childe and god they thanke & hery
Whan it Was two yeer olde and fro the breste
Departid from his norice up on a day
This Markis caughte yet anothir lest
To tempte his Wyf yet ofter yf he may
Vnmedeles Was she temptid in assay
But Wedded men can no mesure
Whan that they fynde a pacient creature
Wyf quod this Markis ye haue herd this
My pepil breith bruy sikirly our mariage
And namely sith my sone I born is
Now it is Wors than euer in al our age
The murmur sleth myn herte and my corage
For to myn eeris comyth the vois so smerte
That it ful nygh destroid hath myn hert
Now say they thus Whan Walter is agoon
Than shal the blood of Jamaula succede
And be our lord for other haue We noon
Suche Wordis saith my peple out of drede
Wel oughte I of suche murmur take hede

For certeinly I drede suche sentence
Though they not pleyne in myn audience
I wolde lyue in pees yf that I myghte
Wherfore I am disposid ful wttirly
As I his sustir seruyd be nyght
Right so thinke I to serue hym priuely
This warne I you that ye not sodenly
Out of your self for no wo sholde affraye
Be pacient and ther of I you pray
I haue quod she said thus and euer shal
I wol no thing in no maner certeyn
But as you list nothing greuith me at al
Though that my doughter & my sone be slayn
At your comaundement this is forto sayn
I haue had no part of childrey tweyn
But first seeknes and after woo and peyne
Ye keep our lordy/doth with your owen thing
Right as you list axeth no leue of me
For as I lefte at hoom al my clothinge
When I cam first to you right so quod she
Lefte I my wyl and al my liberte
And took your clothinge wherfore I you pray
Doth your plesaunce I wyl your lust obey
And certis yf I hadde ony prescience
Your wyll to knowe or ye your lust me tolde
I wolde it do withoute negligence
But nowe I woot your lust and what ye wolde
Al your plesaunce ferm and stabil I holde
For wiste I that my deth myghte do you ese

Right gladly wolde I dye you to please
Deth may not make no maner of comparison
Unto your loue/and when this Markis say
The constaunce of his wyf he cast a doun
His yen two and wondrid that she may
In pacience suffir al this maner aray
And forth he goth with drery contenaunce
But to his herte it was ful gret plesaunce
This bgle seriaunt in the same wyse
That her doughter caughte right so he
Or wors yf men can wors deuyse
Hath hent her sone that ful is of beaute
And euer in one so pacient was she
That she no chere of heuynes
But kist hym sone and aftir gan hym bles
Saue this she prayde hym yf that he mighte
Her litil sone he wolde in the erthe graue
His tendir lymes delicat in sighte
Fro foulis and fro bestis it to saue
But she non other answer of hym mighte haue
He went his wey as he no thing thoughte
But to boleyne he it tenderly broughte
This Markis wondred euer lenger the more
Upon her pacience and that she
Hady not knowe sothly therfore
That parfitly her childrен loued she
He wolde haue wend of som subtilte
And of malice and for cruel corage
That she hadde suffrid this with sad visage

But Well he knelw that nept hym self certeyn
She louyd her children best in euery wyse
But nolw of Women Wolde I aye ful feyn
Yf thyse assayes myght not suffyse
What coude a sturdy husbonde more deuyse
To preue her Wifhood or her stedfastnes
And he contynuynge euer in his sturdynes
But ther ben folk of suche maner condicion
And so Wilful suche assayes to make
That can not stynte of here entencion
But right as they were bounden to a stake
They Wol not of hir firste purpos slake
Right so this Markis hath fully purposid
To tempte his Wyf as he Was first disposed
He Waytid as yf he Word or contenaunce
That she to hym Was chaungid of corage
But neuer coude he fynde ony Variaunce
She Was ay in on herte and in Visage
And the ferther that she Was in age
The more trelwe yf it Were possibil
She Was to hym and the more plesibill
For Whiche it semyd thus that of hem tWo
Ther Was but on Wille for but as Walter leste
The same lust Was her plesaunce also
And goddes bethankid al fyl for the beste
She shelwde Weel for noy Wordly Intereste
A Wyf as of her self no thing ne sholde
Wille in effect but as her husbondes Wolde
The slaunder of Walter Wonder Wyde spradde

That of cruel herte he ful Wickidly
For he a poure Woman Weddid hade
Hath murdrid bothe his childryn priuely
Suche murmur Was among hem comynly
No Wonder is for to the peplis ere
Ther cam no Word but that they murdrid Were
For Whiche there as the pepil ther before
Hade louid him Wel the ſclaundre of his defame
Made hem that hym they hatid therfore
To be a murdrer is an hateful name
But natheles for erneſt or for game
He of his cruel purpos Wolde not ſtynte
To tempte his Wyf Was al his entent
Whyn that his doughter .vij. yeer Was of age
He in to the court of Rome in ſubtil Wyſe
Enfourmed of his Wil ſente his meſſage
Comaundinge hem ſuche bullis to deuyſe
As to his cruel purpos may ſuffiſe
How that the Pope hadd as for his peplis reſt
That he ſholde Wedde anothir Wyf yf he liſt
I ſay he hadd he ſholde counterfete
The Popis bullis makyng mencion
That he hath leue his firſte Wyf forto lete
As by the Popis olbey diſpenſacion
To ſtynte the rancour of diſcenſion
Betwene his pepil andd hym this ſaidd the bulle
The Whiche they haue publiſſhedd atte fulle
The rude pepil as no Wonder ne is
Wende ful Weel that it hadde be right ſo

But Whan thyse tidyngis cam to Grisildis
I deme that the herte of here Was ful Woo
But she y lik sadȝ Was euermo
Disposidȝ Was this humbyl creature
The aduersite of fortune al to endure
Abidynge euer his lust andȝ his plesaunce
To Whom that she Was yeuen herte andȝ al
As to his lerry Wordly sufficiaunce
But shortly yf I this storȝ telle shal
This Markis Writen hath in special
A lettir in Whiche he sheWith his entent
Andȝ secretly to Boleyne he hath it sent
To the erle of Pauye Whiche hade tho
Weddidȝ his suster/prayde hym specially
To bryngе hom ayeen his childreȝ tWo
In honourable staat al openly
But o thingȝ he hym prayde entierly
That he no Wight though they didȝ enquere
Sholde not telle Whoos childreȝ that they Were
But say the mayde shal Weddidȝ he
Vnto the Markis of Saluces anoȝ
Andȝ as this erle Was prayd so didȝ he
For atte day set he oȝ his Wey is gooȝ
Andȝ forth he wodȝ hastly andȝ that anooȝ
Tolwardȝ Saluce this mayde forto gyde
Here yongȝ brothir ridyngȝ be hir syde
Araidȝ Was tolwardȝ her mariage
This fresssh may ful of gemmys cleer
Her brother Whiche, Dij. yeer Was of age

Araid ful fresh in her manere
And thus with gret noblesse and glady chere
Toward Saluces spedyng her iournay
Fro day to day they ridey in her way

¶ Quarta pars.

Among al this after his wickedy vsage
This Markis is yet about to tempte more
The bittereste preef of her corage
Fully to haue experience and lore
Yf she were as stedfast as before
He on a day in opey audience
Ful boistously hath saidy here this sentence
Certis Grisilde I hady I nolle of plesaunce
To haue you to my wyf for your goodnes
As for your trouthe andy your obeysaunce
Nat for your lynage ne for your riches
But nolle knolle I in verey sothfastnes
That in gret lordship yf I me wol auyse
Ther is gret seruytut in sondry wyse
I may not do as euery plolman may
My peppl constreyneth me forto take
Another wyf andy crpey day be day
And eke the peplis rancour forto slake
Conentith it that dar I wel vndertake
And trewly thus muche I wol you say
Myn nelle wyf is comyng be the way
Be strongy of herte & voyde anoy her place
And that dolber that ye broughte me
Takith it ayey I yeue you leue of my grace

Allas quod ſhe that euer this ſholde happe
For Wende I neuer be poſſibilite
That ſuche a meruayl mighte be
That is ayens the proces of nature
And hoom ſhe goth a ſorouful creature
For ferry feer bimethe might ſhe go
She wepith and waylith a day or two
And ſwolwnyth that rolwthe was to ſe
But why it was vnto noman tolde ſhe
For out of tolwne was goon Arueragus
But to her ſelf ſhe ſpak and ſayde thus
With face paal and ſorouful chere
In her compleynt as ye ſhul aftir here
Allas quod ſhe on the fortune I pleyne
That vnwaar wrappidy haſt me in thy cheyne
Fro whiche to ſcape knolwe I no ſocour
Saue onky deth or to grete diſhonour
One of thyſe two behouyth me to cheſe
But natheles yet haue I leuyr leſe
My lyf than of my body haue a ſhame
Or knolwe my ſelf fals or leſe my name
And with my deth I may be quyt I wis
Hath ther nat many an nobil wyf or this
And meny a mayde ſleyn her ſelf allas
Rathir than with her body done treſpaas
Yes certes thyſe ſtoryes berith witnes
Whan. yyy. tiraunts ful of aurſidnes
Hadde ſleyn auelly Fidon atte feſte (in athenes at a feſt)
Thy comaundidy his doughtris forto areſte

And bryngē hem forth in despit
Al nakid to fulfille her delit
And on her fadres blood made hem daunce
Up on the pament god yeue hem myschaunce
For whiche the wofful maydens ful of drede
Rathir than they wolde lese her maydenhede
They been priuely stert in to a welle
And dreynt hem self as the bokis telle
They of meten leten enquire and seke
Of lacedomy fifty maydens eke
On whiche they wolden a done her lecherye
But was ther non of al that company
That she nas sleyn & that with glady entent
Chees rather to dye than to assent
To be oppressid of her maydenhede
Why sholde I thanne to dye be in drede
Lo eke the tiraunt Aristoclides
That louyd a mayde highte Stymphalides
Whey her fader sleyn was on a nyght
Unto dianes goth she right
And hente the ymage in her hondis two
From whiche ymage wolde she not go
No wight the hondis of here myghte arace
Til she was sleyn right in the place
Now sith that maydens hadde suche despit
To been dispoylid with mannys delit
Wel oughte a wyf rathir her self to sle
Than be despoylid as thinkith me
What shal I say of Hasdrubaldis wyf

That at Cartage bereft her self her lyf
Whan that she sawh the romayns wyn the toun
She took her childryn alle & skippedy a doun
In to the fyre andy chaas rather to dye
Than ony Romayn didy her vilonye
Hath not Lucrece slayn her self allas
At Rome for she oppressidy was
Of Tarquyne for her thoughte it was a shame
To lyue whan she hady lost her name
The .vij. maydens of Millesses also
Haue sleyn hem self for verry drede andy woo
Rather than the folk of Galele sholde hem oppresse
Mo than a thousandy storyes y gesse
Coude I telle as touching this matere
Whan Hellerada was sleyn his wyf so dere
Her self slough andy leet her bloody to glide
In hellaradas open woundis wyde
Andy sayde my body atte leste wey
Ther shal no wight defoylle it yf I may
What shal I of hem mo ensamplis sayn
But so many haue hem self slayn
Wel rathir than they wolde defoulidy be
I wol conclude that is the beste for me
To sle my self than be defoulidy thus
I wol be trewe vnto Arueragus
Or ellis sle my self in som manere
Right as dide demedons doughter dere
Be cause she ne wolde defouledy be
Of Oedasus it is ful greet pite

To rede holde thy doughtris deyde allas
That slough her self in suche a maner caas
As gret pitee it was or wel more
The Thebay mayden that for Archamore
Her self slough right for suche maner woo
And ȝet another Thebay mayden right so
For one of Macedone hadȝ her ouyr pressidȝ
She with her deth her maydenhede redressidȝ
What shal I sayn of Macerates wyf
That for suche a caas bereaft her self her lyf
Holde trewe eek was also Alcebades
That for his loue to dien rathir chees
Than forto suffre his body vnburyedȝ to be
Whiche a wyf was Alceste also quodȝ she
What saith Omere of Penelope
Al greece knowith of her chastite
Parde of lacedomea is writyn thus
That whan at Rome was sleyn Protholomus
No lenger wolde she lyue aftir his day
The same of nobil Prothesma telle y may
Withoute Brutus coude she neuer lyue
To whom she hadde her herte al yeue
The parfyt wyf of Archemecye
Honouridȝ is thorow out al Barbarye
O tentquies thy verey chastite
To alle wyuys may a mirrour be
Thus pleyneth Origene a day or tweye
Purposinge euer that she wolde dey
But natheles vp on the thridde nyght

Home comyth Arueragus the Worthy knyght
And axeth here Why she Wepith so sore
And she gan Wepe euer lengir the more
And told hym al the caas by and by
Holw she had promysed ignorantly
The squier like as ye haue herd to fore
Hit nedeth not to reherce hit ony more
This husbond With glad chere in frendly Wyse
Answerde and sayde as I shal deuyse
Is ther aught ellis Dorigene but this
Nay nay she sayde god helpe me so as this
This is to mykil and it ne Were goddis Wyl
Ye Wyf quod he lat slepyn and be styll
It may be Wel yet pauenture to day
Ye shal your trouthe holde be my fay
For god so Wisly haue mercy on me
I hadde Wel leuer stikid forto be
For Verry loue Whiche I to you haue
But ye sholde your trouthe kepe and saue
Trouthe is the hiest thing that man may kepe
But With that Worde she brast anon to Wepe
And sayde I you forbede on peyne of deth
That neuer Whyle you lastith lyf or breth
To no Wight to telle of this mysauenture
As I may best I Wol my Woo endure
Ne make no contenaunce of heuynes
That folk of you may deme harm or ges
And forth he clepith a squier and a mayde
Go forth anone With Dorigene he sayde

And bryngh her to ſuche a place anone
They tolke her leue and on her Wey they goon
But they ne Wiſte Why ſhe thyder Wente
He Wolde no Wight telle his entente
This ſquier Whiche hight Aurilius
On Dorigene that Was amerous
Of auenture happid here to mete
Amyd the tolwn right in the quickeſt ſtrete
As ſhe Wold haue gon the Wey forth right
Tolward the gardyn there as ſhe hadde hight
And he Was in to the gardyn Ward alſo
For Wel he ſpyed Whan ſhe Wolde go
Out of her hous to ony maner place
But thus they metyn he auenture and grace
And he ſalueth her With glad entent
And auid of her Whithirward ſhe Went
And ſhe anſWerde half as ſhe Were mad
Unto the gardyn as my huſbond bad
My trouthe forto holde allas allas
Aurilius gan Wonder in this caas
And in his herte hadde gret compaſſion
Of her chere and of her lamentacion
And of Arueragus the Worthy knyght
That bad her holde that ſhe had hight
So loth him Was yf ſhe ſholde breke her trouthe
And in his herte he caughte of this gret tolbthe
Conſiderynge the beſte on euery ſide
That from that luſt yet Were hym leuer abyde
Than to do ſo high a foliſſh Wrechidnes

Ageyns fraunchecie andy gentilnes
For Whiche in felwe wordis sayde he thus
Madame say to your lordy Arueragus
That sith y se his grete gentilnes
To you andy eke I se your distres
That him were leuer haue a shame & þ were routhe
Than ye to me this sholde breke your trouthe
I haue wel leuyr euyr to suffre woo
Than I departe sholde the loue betwix you two
I you release Madame in to your hondy
Quyt euery surement andy euery bondy
That ye haue made to me as here beforn
Sithyn that tyme that ye were first born
My trouthe y plight I shal you neuer repreue
Of noon beheste andy here I take my leue
As of the trewest andy eke the best wyf
That euer yet I knew in al my lyf
But euery wyf kewaar of her behest
On Dorigene remembrith atte leste
Thus can a squier do a gentil dede
As wel as can a knyght withouten drede
She thankith hym vp on her knees bare
Andy hoom to her husbonde is she fare
Andy tolde hym al as ye haue herdy me saidy
Andy be ye siker that he was wel a paidy
That it were impossible me to wryte
What sholde I longer of this caas endite
Arueragus andy Dorigene his wyf
In souereyn blisse ledyn forth her lyf

Neuer aftir Was ther anger hem betWene
He cherisshed her though she Were a quene
And she Was treW to hym for euermore
Of thyse tWo folk ye gete of me nomore
Aurilius that his cost hath al forlorne
Cursith the tyme that he Was borN
Allas allas quod he that y behight
Of purid gold a thousand pound Weyght
Vnto this Philosopher hold shal I do
I se nomore but that I am forDo
Myn heritage y muste nedis selle
And be a beggar here I may not duelle
And shamyn al my kynrede in this place
But I of hym may gete sum grace
But natheles I Wol of hym assay
At certeyn yeris and daies to paye
And thanke hym of his grete curteSie
My trouthe Wol I kepe I Wil not lye
With herte sore he goth Vnto his cofyr
And broughte gold Vnto this Philosophir
The Valew of fyue hundrid pound I ges
And hym besechith of his gentilnes
To graunte hym daYes of the remenaunt
And sayde maistir I dar Wel make auaunt
I faylid neuer of my trouthe as yet
For sikirly my dette shal be quyt
ToWard you hold auer that I face
To go a beggyng in my kirtil bare
But yf ye Wolde Vouchesauf on surete

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Two yeer or thre to respite me
Than were I wel for ellis mot I selle
Myn heritage ther is nomore to telle
This philisophre sobirly answerde
And sayde thus whan he his wordis herde
Haue y not holde couenaunt vnto the
Yes certis wel and trewly quod he
Hast thou not hady thy lady as the likith
No no quod he and sorousfully he sikith
What was the cause tel me yf thou can
Aurilius anone his tale began
And tolde hym al as ye haue herdy before
It nedith not to reherce it you nomore
He sayde Arueragus of gentilnes
Hadde leuer to dye in sorow and in distres
Than that his wyf were of her trouth fals
The sorow of Dorigene he tolde hym als
How loth her were to be a wickidy wyf
And that she hadde leuer haue lost hir lyf
And her trouthe she swore thorou Innocence
She neuer erst hady herdy of apparence
That made me to haue in her so gret pyte
And right as frely as he sent her to me
As frely sent I her hom to hym agayn
This is al and som ther is nomore to seyn
This philisophir answerde leue brother
Euerich of you didy gentilnes to other
Thou art a squier and he is a knyght
But godi forbede for his blisful myght

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This Leaf was given to Merton Coll. Library
by Edd. Spencer 1815.

But a clerk coude do as gentil a dede
As wel as ony of you it is no drede
Sire I relece thy thousandy pundy
As nowh thou were cropey out of the grounde
Ne neuer or nowh thou haddist knowhen me
For sire I wol not take a peny of the
For al my craft ne for al my trauaylle
Thou hast wel paidy for my vitaylle
It is ynowh farwel andy haue goody day
And took his hors andy forth he goth his way
Lordingis this questiony thay are I yowh
Whiche was the moste fre as thinkith yowh
Nowh tellith me er ye furthir wende
I cay nomore my tale is at ay ende
Here endith the Frankeleyns tale.
Here begynneth the secondy Nonnes prologh.
The mynystre andy norisshe of alle vicis
Whiche that men clepe in englisch Idelnesse
Whiche that is porter of the yate of delicis
To eschuey andy by her contrary hem to oppresse
That is to say le leesful lesines
Wel ought we to do al our entent
Lest that the fende with Idelnes vs hent
For he with his thousandy cordis slye
Continually vs waytith to le clappe
Whay he may may in Idelnes aspye
He can so lighely cache hym in his trappe
Til that a may resent right by the lappe
He nys not waar the fendy hath hym in hondy

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Wel oughte vs worche & ydelnes withstond
And though men drede neuer forto dye
Yet se men wel be reson doutles
That ydelnesse is hotyn slogardrye
Of whiche ther comyth neuer no good entrees
And syn that slougthe her holdith in a lees
Only forto slepe and ete and drynke
And to deuouryn al that othir swynke
And forto put vs from suche ydelnes
That cause is of so gret confusiõ
I haue here don my feithful besines
Aftir the legend and translacion
Right so thy glorious lyf and passion
Thou with thy garlond wrought of rose & lilye
The mene I mayde and martir saint Cecily
And thou that flour art of virgins alle
Of whom that Bernard list so wel to wryte
To the at my firste begynnynge I calle
Thou comfort of vs wrecchis do me endite
Thy maydens deth that whan thorou her merite
The eterne lyf thou graunte of the fend victory
As men mowe aftir rede in her story
Thou mayde and moder doughter of thy sone
Thou welle of mercy synful soulis to cure
In whom that god of bounte chaas forto wone
Thou humbil and high ouer euery creature
Thou noblist so ferforth ouer nature
That no disdeigne thy maker had of kynde
His sone in blood and flesh to clothe & wynde

Whiche in the cloister of thy blissful entrees
Toke mannys shapthe the eterne loue & pees
That of thy tryne compas lordy and gide is
Whom heuyn and erthe and se Withoute les
Ay herien and thou Virgine doutles
Baar of thy body and dueldist maydy pure
The creatour of euery creature
Assembliy is in the magnificence
With mercy goodnes and suche pyte
That thou that art the sonne of excellence
Not only helpist theym that praieth the
But oftyn tyme of thy benignite
Ful freely or that may thyn help seche
Thou gost beforn and art our soulis leche
Nowh help thou blissful and meke fair mayde
Me flemyd Wrecche in this desert of galle
Think on the Woman of Canane that sayde
That Whelpis etyn somy of the cromys smalle
That from her lordis table ley y falle
And though that I vnworthy sone of Eue
Be synful yet accepte my beleue
And for that feith is ded Withoute Werkis
So forto Werkyn yeue me Witte and space
That I be quyt from thens that most derk is
O thou that art so fair and ful of grace
Be myn aduocate in that high place
There as Withouten ende is sunge Osanne
Thou artis moder doughter dere of anne
And of thy light my soule in prisoy light

That troublidy is be the cogitacion
Of my body andy also be the Wight
Of ertly lust andy fals affection
O hauyn of refut o saluacion
Of hem that ben in sorwb andy distresse
Nowb help forto my Work I Wol me dresse
Yet y pray you that redyn that I Wryte
For yef me that I do no diligence
This ilke story besily to endite
For bothe haue I the Wordis andy the sentence
Of hym that atte seyntis reuerence
The story Wroot andy folowbedy her legende
As ferforth as godi Wyl me grace sende
First Wolde I yowb the name of saint Cecily
Expoune as meny may in her story se
It is to say in englissh heuenys lylye
For pure chastnes of Virginite
Oz for the Witnes hadde of honeste
Andy grene of conscience andy of godi fame
The swete sauour lily Was her name
Oz Cecily is to say the Wey to blynde
For the ensaumpil Was be goody techinge
Oz ellis Cecily as I Writyn fynde
Is ioynedy be a maner comynge
Of heuyn andy lya in her infigurynge
The heuyn is set for thought of holynes
Andy lya for her lastinge besines
Cecily may eek be saidy in this manere
Wantyngy of blyndnes for her gret light

Of ſapience and ſoz hir thewis clere
Oz ellis lo this maydens name bright
Of heuyn and leos comyth of whiche le right
Men might hir wel the heuyn of pepil calle
Enſample of good & wyſe worlkis with alle
For leos pepil in englisſh is forto ſay
And right as men may in the heuyn ſe
The ſonne and mone and ſterris euery way
Right ſo men goſtly in this mayden fre
Salwyn of feith the grete magnanimite
And eek the clerenes hool of ſapience
And ſondry werkis bright of excellence
And right ſo as thyſe philoſophris wryte
That heuyn is ſwift & wundy & eke bremynge
Right ſo was faire Cecily the whyte
Ful ſwift and buſy in euery good werkynge
And wunde and hool in good pſeuerynge
And bremynge euer in charite ful bright
Now haue I declared you what she hight

¶ Here endith the Second Nonnys prologh.

¶ And here begynneth the tale.

This maiden bright Cecili as her legende ſaith
Was comyn of Romayns of nobil kynde
And from her cradil vp foſtrid in the faith
Of crist and haar his goſpel in mynde
She neuer ſeced as I writen fynde
Of her praiere and god to loue and drede
Beſekynge hym to kepe her maydenhede
And whan this mayde ſholde vnto a man

I Wedded be that Was ful of yongh age
Whiche that y clepid Was Valerian
And day Was come of her mariage
She ful deuout and humbil in her corage
Vnder her Robe of gold that sat ful feyre
Hadde next her flesh I clad her in an heir
And Whyle that the Organs made melody
To god aboue thus in her herte songh she
O lord my body and eek my soule gy
Vnwemmyd left I confoundid be
And for his loue that vp on the tre
Euery seconde and thridde day she fast
Ay biddynge in her orisons ful fast
The nyght cam and to ledde must she goon
With her husbonde as it Was the maner
And priuely she sayde to hym anoon
O swete and Welbelouyd spouse dere
Ther is a counsel and ye Wol it here
Whiche that right fayn I Wolde to you seye
So that ye swere ye Wil it not bewrey
Valerian gan faste to her swere
That for no caas ne thing that might be
He sholde neuer to none bewreyen her
And than at erst to hym sayde she
I haue an aungel Whiche that louyth me
That With gret loue Wher so I Wake or slepe
Is redy ay my body forto kepe
And yf that he may felen out of drede
That ye me touche or loue in vilony

He right anon wil ſle you with the dede
And in your youthe thus ſhul ye dy
And yf that ye in clene lif me gy
He wol you loue as me for your clennes
And ſhewe to you his ioye and his brightnes
This Valerian ourrectidy as godi wolde
Anſwerde agayn yf I ſhal triſte the
Lete me that aungel ſe and hym beholde
And yf that it a ſterry aungel be
Than wol I do as thou haſt praidy me
And yf thou loue anothir man for ſoth
Right with this ſwerdy than wol I ſle you both
Cecily anſwerde anon right in this wyſe
Yef that you liſt anon right the aungel ſhul ye ſe
So that ye trowe on crift andy you baptiſe
Goth forth to via appia quod ſhe
That from this toun ſtondith but mylis thre
And to the poure folkis that there duellyn
Sey hem right thus as I ſhal you tellyn
Tel hem that I Cecili you to hem ſent
To ſhewen you goody Urban the olde
For ſecretnes andy for goody entent
And whan that ye ſaint Urban haue beholde
Telle hym the wordis whiche that I to you tolde
And whan that he hath purgidy you from ſynne
Than ſhal ye ſe that aungel or ye twynne
This Valerian is in to the place goon
And right as he was taught be her lernynge
He fondy this holy may Urban anon

Among the saintis seriels lokynge
And he anon Withouten taryynge
Dide his message and When that he it tolde
Urban for ioye gan his hondis vpholde
The teris from his yen let he falle
Almyghty lord O Jhesu crist quod he
Sower of chastite counsellour of hs alle
The fruyt of that seed of chastite
That thou hast sowe in Cecily take to the
Lo lik a bisy bee Withoutyn gyle
Thy seruaunt ay thyn owen thral Cecile
For that spouse that she took but nowe
Ful lik a fers lioun she sendith here
As meke as euer Was ony lamb to ewe
And With that word anon ther gan apere
An old man yclothid in White clothis clere
That hadde a book With letris of gold in honde
And gan before Valerian forto stonde
Valerian as ded fyl down for drede
When he this old man sawe standing so
Whiche forthWith anone he herd hym rede
O lorde of alle o feith o god Withouten mo
O cristendome and fadir of al also
Abouyn al and ouyr al euerywhere
Thyse wordis al With gold writen were
When this Was red they said this olde man
Leuyst thou this thing or no say ye or nay
I leue al thing quod Valerian
For sother thinge than this I dar Wel say

Vnder heuyn no Wight thinke may
Tho Kanyssshed this olde may he ne Wiste Where
And Pope Vrban hym cristened right dere
Valerian goth hoom and fyndeth Cecily
With ynne his chambir With an angel stondy
This aungel hadde of Rosis and of lily
Crowbnys two the Whiche he bare in hondy
And first to Cecily as J vnderstondy
He yaf that on and than gan he take
That other to Valerian her make
With body cleen and vnWemmyd thought
Kepith ay Weel this crowbnys quod he
Fro Paradyse to you hem haue J brought
Ne neuer mo shal they roten be
Ne lese her sote sauyr trustith me
Ne neuer Wight ne shal se hem With ye
But he be chast and hate felony
And thou Valerian for thou so sone
Assentist to goddis counsel also
Say What thou list and thou shalt haue thy bone
J haue a brothir quod Valerian tho
That in this Worlde J loue noman so
J pray you that my brother may haue grace
To knowe the trouthe as J do in this place
The aungel sayde godi likith thy request
And bothe With the palme of matirdome
Ye shul come in to his blissful reste
And With that Wordi Tiburce his brother com
And Whan that he the sauour vndernom

Whiche that Rosis and the lilyes caste
He spak vnto his brother in gret haste
And sayde I wonder this tyme of the yeer
Whens that this swete sauour comyth so
Of Rosis and of lilyes that y smelle here
For thogh y hadde hem in my hondis two
The sauour mighte in me no depper go
The swete sauour that in my herte I fynde
Hath chaungid me al in another kynde
Valerian sayde two croumys haue wee
Snow white and Rose reed that shyneth clere
Whiche that thyn yen haue no might to see
And as thou smelliste thourogh my prayer
So shalt thou se hem leue brother dere
If it so be thou wilt withouten slowthe
Beleue a right and knowe verry trowthe
Tiburce answerde saiste thou this to me
In sothnes or in dreme I herkyn this
In dremys quod Valerian haue we be
Vnto this tyme brother myn ywis
But now at erst our duellyng in trouthe is
How wotiste thou this qd Tiburce & in what wyse
Quod Valerian that shal I the deuyse
The aungel of god hath me the trouthe I taught
Whiche thou shalt se yf thou wilt reneye
The ydollis and be clene and ellis nought
And of the miracle of thyse croumys tweye
Seynt Ambrose in his prefas list forto seye
Solempuli this nobil doctour dere

Comendith and ſaith in this manere
The palm of martirdom ſoꝛto receyue
Seynt Cecile fulfilled of goddis yefte
The Woꝛlde and eek her chambir gan ſhe Weyue
Witnes Cecily and Tiburces ſhrifte
To Whiche god of his bounte Wolde ſhifte
Crolbnys tWo of flouris ſWete ſmellynge
And his aungel hem the crolbnys bꝛynge
The mayde hath bꝛought hem to blis aboue
The Woꝛlde hath Wiſt that it is Woꝛthy certeyn
Deuocion and chaſtite Wel ſoꝛto loue
Tho ſhewde hym Cecily al opey and pleyn
That alle ydols leey but a thing in feyn
For they be domb and therto they be deef
And chargedy hym his ydolis ſoꝛto leef
Who ſo that troWeth nat this a beſt he is
Quod tho Tiburce yf J ſhal not lye
And ſhe gan kiſſe his bꝛeſt that herde this
And Was ful glad he couthe trouthe aſpye
This day J take the foꝛ myn alye
Saidy this bliſſedy faire mayden dere
And aftir that ſhe ſayde as ye molbe here
Lo right ſo as the loue of criſt quod ſhe
Made me thy bꝛotheris Wyf right in this Wyſe
Anoy foꝛ myn alye here take J the
Syn that thou Wilt thyn ydols diſpiſe
Go With thy bꝛother noW and the baptiſe
And make the cleey ſo that thou may beholde
That angelis face Whiche thy bꝛothir of tolde

Tiburce anſwerde and ſayde brother dere
First tel me whethir I ſchal and to what may
To whom qd he com forth with right goody chere
I wyl the lede vnto the pope Vrban
To Vrban brother myn quod Valerian
Quod tho Tiburce wolt thou me thider lede
Me thinketh that it were a wonder drede
Ne mene ye not Vrban quod he tho
That is ſo ofte dampned to be ded
And woneth in halkis alwey to and fro
And dar not onys put forth his hed
Men ſholde hym breme in a fire ſo reed
Yf he were founde yf men mighte hym aſpye
And we alſo to bere hym companye
And whyle we ſekyn that diuinite
That is hid in heuene priuely
Algate brent in this worlde ſchal we be
To whom Cecily anſwerde boldly
Men mighte drede wel and ſkilfully
This lif to like myn olden dere brother
If this were liuynge only and non other
But there is bettir lif in other place
That neuer ſchal beloſt ne drede the nought
Whiche goddis ſone vs tolde thorwh his grace
That fadris ſone hath al thing wrought
And al that wrought is with a ſkilful thought
The goſt that from the fader gan procede
Hath ſoulidy hym withouten ony drede
By worde and by mirakil lo goddis ſon

Whan he was in this worlde declarid here
That ther is other lyf there men may woon
To whom answerde Tiburce o fustir dere
Me seydist thou right now in this manere
Ther nas but o god lordy in sothfastnes
And now of thre how maist thou bere witnes
That shal I telle quod she or that I go
Right as a may hath sapiences thre
Memorye engeny and intellect also
So in suche beynge of dyuinyte
Thre psones may ther right wel be
Tho gan she there ful bisily hym preche
Of cristis son and of his peynes teche
And many poyntis of his passion
How goddis sone in this worlde was withholde
To do mankynde pleyn remission
That ben bounde in synnys and caris colde
Alle thyse thingis she vnto Tiburce tolde
And aftir this Tiburce in goody entent
With Valerian to Pope Vrban went
That thankid god & with glady herte & light
He cristned hym and made hym in that place
Parfit in his lernyng goddis knyght
And aftir this Tiburce gat suche grace
That euery day he saw in tyme and space
The aungel of god and euery maner bone
That he god apid it was sped ful sone
It were ful hard be ordir forto seyn
How many wondris Jhesus for hym wrought

But atte laste to telle short and pleyn
The sergeauntis of the toun hem sought
And hem before almache the Prefect broughte
Whiche hem aposid and knew al her entent
And to the ymage of Jubiter hem sent
And sayde Who so Wil do no sacrifise
Slwap of his hed this is my sentence here
Anone thyse martirs that I you deuyse
One Maximus that Was an officere
Of the Prefectis and his Counselere
Hem hent and the sayntis forthledde
Hym self he Wepte for pyte that he hadde
When Maximus had herd the sayntis lore
He gat hym of the turmentours leue
And hadde hem to his hous Withouten more
And With her prechinge or it Were eue
They gomme fro the turmentours forto reue
And fro Maxime and fro his folk echone
The fals feith to trowe in god allone
Cecily cam When it Was Wope nyght
With preestis that hem cristned alle in fere
And afterward When day Was Woxen light
Cecily sayde hem With a ful stedfast chere
Now cristis owen knyghtis leef and dere
Cast al awey the Workis of derkenesse
And arme you With armys of brightnesse
Ye haue forsoth ydon a gret bataylle
Your cours is don your feith hath you conserued
Goth to the croune of lif that may not fayllle

The rightful Juge Whiche ye haue seruyd
Shal yeue it you as ye haue it deseruyd
And Whan this thing Was sayd as y deuyse
Men ledde hem forth to do sacrifyse
But Whey they Were to the place I brought
To tellen shortly the conclusion
They nolde entende ne sacrifyse right nought
But on here knees setten hem a down
With humbil herte and sad deuocioun
And losten bothe her heddis in the place
Her soulis Wente to the kyng of grace
This Maximus that saW this thing betyde
With pitous teris tolde it anon right
That he her soulis saW to heuyn glide
With aungelis ful of cleernes and light
And With his Word conuertid many a Wight
For Whiche almachius didy hym so to bete
With Whippis of ledy til he is lif gan lete
Cecily hym took and buriedy hym anon
By tiburce and Valerian sothly
With yme her burynge place Vnder the stoon
And aftir this Almachius hastely
Sadi his mynistris seachyn openly
Cecily so that she might in his presence
Do sacrifyse and Jubiter encense
But they conuertidy at her Wyse lore
Weptyn ful sore and yaf ful credence
Vnto her Worde and crideny more and more
Crist goddis sone Whiche Without difference

Is ferry gody this is our ſentence
That hath a ſeruaunt ſo goody hym to ſerue
This With o boys We trolbey though We ſterue
Almachins that herde of this doynge
Bady feche Cecily that he mighte her ſe
Andy alderfirſt this Was his aymge
What maner Woman art thou quod he
I am a gentilWoman bozn quod ſhe
I axe the quod he though it the greue
Of thy religion andy of thy beleue
Why thay began ye your queſtion folily
Quod ſhe that Wolde tWo anſWers conclude
In o demaunde ye apidy leWdly
Almache anſWerde to that ſimilitude
Of Whens comyth thyn anſWer ſo rude
Of Whens quod ſhe Whan that ſhe Was freyned
Of conſcience andy of goody feith vnfeyned
Almachins ſayde ne takiſt thou no hede
Of my polber andy ſhe anſWerdy hym this
Your myght quod ſhe is ful litil to drede
For euery moztal mannys polber nys
But lik a bladder ful of Wyndy yWis
For With anedelis poynt Whey it is blolbe
May al the boſte of it be leidy ful lolbe
Ful Wrongfully began thou quod he
Andy in Wrongy is yet al thy pſeueraunce
Woſt thou nat holb our princis mighty e fre
Haue thus comaundidy andy made ordenaunce
That euery criſtyn Wight ſhal haue penaunce

But yf that he his cristendom With seye
And gon al quyt yf he Wol it veneye
Your Prynces every as your nobleye doth
Quod tho Cecile in a Woody sentence
Ye make vs gilty and it is not soth
For ye that knowen Wel our Jnocence
For as muche as We do ay reuerence
To crist and for We bere a cristyn name
Ye put vs in cryme and eke in blame
But We that knowen that name so
For vertuous We may it nat Withseye
Almache answerde chees on of thyse two
Do sacrifise or cristendom Veneye
That thou mowe ascape as y the seye
At Whiche Worde this holy blisful mayde
Gan forto laughe and to the Juge sayde
O Juge confused in thy nycete
Wolt thou that y veneye Jnocence
To make me a Wicked Wight quod she
Lo he dissimulith here in audience
He starith and Wodith in his aduertence
To Whom almache sayde o sely Wrecche
Ne Wotist thou not how fer my might may strecche
Haue not our mighty Prynces yeuen
To me bothe power and auctorite
To make folk bothe dyen and lyuyn
Why spekist thou than so proudly to me
I speke not but stedfastly quod she
Not proudly for y sey as for my side

We hatyn dedly that vice of pryde
And yf thou drede not as soth forto here
Than wol y shew al openly be right
Thou that hast maad a ful gret lesynge here
Thou saist thy Prynces haue yeue the might
Bothe forto slee and forto quyken a wight
That thou maist but only lif bereue
Thou hast noon other poure ne non leue
But thou maist say thy Princis haue the makidy
Ministre of deth for yf thou speke yf mo
Thou liest for thy poure is ful nakidy
Do wey thy boldnes saidy Almache tho
And do sacrifise to our goddis or you go
I recche not what Wrongy thou me profre
For I can suffre as can a Philisofre
But that Wrongis may I not endure
That thou spekist of our goddis here quod he
O Cecily answerre O nyce creature
Thou saidist no Wordy sithnes thou spakist to me
That I ne knelbe therbith thyn nyece
And that thou were in euery maner wyse
A lelbdy Officer and a leyn Justyse
Ther lackith no thingy of thyn Vtter yen
But thou art blyndy for thingy that we se al
That is a stoon that mobe men wel aspien
That ilke stoon a gody thou Wolt it callyn
I rede the leet thyn hondy vpon it fallyn
And taste it wel a stoon thou shalt it fynde
Syn that thou seest not With thyn yen blynde

It is a shame that the pepyl shal
So skorne and lawgh at thy folye
For comynly men woot it wel ouer al
That mighty god is in his heuenys hye
And thyse ymagis wel thou maist aspye
To the ne to hem self may do no profit
For in effect they be not worth amyte
This and suche other sayde she
And he was wroth & bad men sholde her lede
Hoom vntil her hous and in her hous qd he
Grey her in a bath of flamys rede
And as he bad right so was it do in dede
For in a bath they gomme her faste shittyn
And nyght and day fyre they vnder kettyn
The longe nyght and eke the day also
For al the fyre and eek the grete hete
She sat al cold and felid no woo
It made her not a drope sore to swete
But in that bath her lif she moot lete
For almachyns with a ful wickid entent
To sle her in the Bath his sonde to her sent
Thre strokis in the necke he smoot here tho
The turmentour but for no maner chaunce
He mighte not smyte her necke atwo
And for ther was that tyme an ordenaunce
That noman sholde do to no psone suche penaunce
The fourthe strook to smyten softe or sore
This turmentour durste do no more
But half dey with her necke ozuyn there

He lefte her ly and̄ ȳ his Wey is Went
The cristen folk Whiche that aboute her Were
With shetis haue the Blood̄ vp hent
Thre dayes leuyd̄ she in this turment
And̄ neuer cesid̄ hem the feith to teche
That she had̄ fostrid̄ hem she gan to preche
And̄ there she yaf her meuables and̄ her thinge
And̄ to Pope Vrban betook hem tho
And̄ sayde Jaskid̄ this of heuene kyng
To haue respit thre dayes and̄ no mo
To perfourme that J before haue do
Thyse soulis and̄ that J may do Wirche
Here of my hous perpetuelly a chirche
Saint Vrban With his dekenys priuely
The body fet and̄ biried̄ it be nyght
Among his other sayntis honestly
Her hous the chirche of saint Cecily hight
Seynt Vrban halowed̄ it as he Wel myght
In Whiche in to this day in nobil Wyse
Men do to crist and̄ to his seyntis seruise
Here endith the Seconde Nonnes tale. And̄
¶ Begynneth the prologe of the chauons yeman.
Hey told̄ Was the lyf of saint Cecile
Or We hadde riden fully .v. myle
At oughten vnder ble Vs gan a take
A man that clothid̄ Was in clothis blake
And̄ vnderneth he Waar a Whyte surplice
His hakney Whiche Was of pomel gryce
So Watte he that Wonder Was to se

Hit ſemyd that he hadde prykid myles thre
Aboute the peytrel ſtood the ſome ful hye
He Was of ſome as fleckid as a pye
The hakeney eek that his yeman rood vpon
So ſwatte that vnethis mighte it goon
A male tWifolde vp on his croppyn lay
It ſemyd that he caried litil aray
Al light for ſomer rood this Worthy man
And in myn herte I Wonder began
What that he Was til that I vnderſtood
How that his cloke Was ſolded to his hood
For Whiche Whan I hadde longe auyſid me
I demyd hym ſum chanon forto be
His hat hing at his bak doun by alace
For he hadde riden more than trot or pace
He wood ay prykynge as he Were Wood
A clote leef he hadde leyd vnder his hood
For ſWoot and forto kepe his hed fro hete
But it Was ioye for to ſe hym ſWete
His forhed droppid as a ſtillatory
Were ful of plantayn or of pelitory
And Whan he Was come he gan crye
God ſaue quod he this ioly companye
To ridey in this mery companye
His yeman Was eek ful of curteſie
Faſte haue I prykid qd he for your ſake
Be cauſe that I Wold you ouer take
And ſayde ſiris nold in the morold tyde
Out of your hoſterye I ſald you ryde

And warned here my lord and souereyn
Whiche that to ryden with you is ful feyn
For his disport he louith daliaunce
Frend for thy warnynge god yeue ỹ good chaunce
Than sayde our ost certeyn it wolde seme
Thy lord were wyse and so y may wel deme
He is ful ioconde also dar y ley
Can he ought telle a mery tale or twey
With whiche he glade may this company
Who sir my lord ye sir withouten ly
He can of mirthe and eke of iolite
Nat but pnolb also sire trustith me
And ye hym knelb as wel as do I
Ye wolde wondre holb wel and craftely
He coude worke and that in sondry wyse
He hath taken on hym meny a gret emprise
Whiche were ful hard for ony that is here
To bringe aboute but they of hym lere
As homely as he ridith amongis yolb
Yf ye hym knelb it wolde be for your prolb
Ye wolde not forgon his aqueyntaunce
For michil goody I dar ley in balaunce
Al that I haue in my possessiõ
He is a man of hye discrecion
I warne you he is a passing wyse man
Wel quod our host tel me yf thou can
Is he a clerk or none tel me what he is
A clerk nay nay he is gretter than a clerk ywis
Sayde this yeman and in wordis fewe

Oste and⁹ of his craft ſom What Wol I ſhelbe
Sire my lorde can ſuche a ſubtilte
That al his craft ye may not Wite of me
For al the grounde⁹ to Caunterbury toun
He coude aſſ clene turne vp ſo doun
And⁹ paue it al With ſiluer and⁹ With gold⁹
And⁹ When this yeman hath thus told⁹
Unto our oſt he ſayde benedicite
This thing⁹ is Wonder meruaylus to me
Syn that thy lorde is of ſo high prudence
Be cauſe of Whiche ſholde men hym reuerence
That of his Worſhip reckith he ſo lyte
His ouerſt ſloppe is not Worth a myte
As in effect to hym ſo moot I go
It is al baudy and⁹ to boze alſo
Why is thy lorde ſo ſluttyſſh I the pray
And⁹ of power is bettir cloth⁹ to bey
Yf that his dede a corde With his ſpeche
Tel me and⁹ that I the beſeche
Why quod this yeman Wherto axe ye of me
God⁹ helpe me ſo for he ſhal neuer the
But I Wol nat auowe that I ſey
And⁹ therfore kepe it ſecret I you prey
He is to Wyſe in feith as I beleue
That is ouer do it Wol neuer preue
And⁹ right as clerkis ſayn it is a vice
Wherfore in that I holde hym lewd⁹ and⁹ nyce
For Whan a man hath ouer gret a Wytte
Ful ofte it happith hym to mys vſe it

So doth my lordy andy that me greuith sore
Ody it amende J can say nomore
Therof no force goody yeman quod our ost
Syn of the kommyngy of thy lordy thou host
Tel hou he doth tel oy nolb hardely
Syn that he is so crafty andy so sly
Where duelle ye yf it be to telle tel me
In the subbarbis of a toury quod he
Lurkinge in hernys andy in lanys blynde
Where as thyse Robbers & thyse theuys bekynde
Holdey her fereful priuy residence
As they that dar not shelbe her presence
So fare we yf we shal say the sothe
Nolb quod our ost lete me talke tothe
Why art thou so discolouridy in thy face
Petir quod he ody yeue it hardy grace
J am so vsidy the hote fire to blolbe
That it hath chaungidy my colour J trolbe
J am not wont in no myrour to prye
But swynke sore andy lerne multiplye
We bloundzyn euer andy polbryn in the fyre
Andy for al that we fayley of our desire
For euer we lacke our conclusion
To muchel folk we do illusion
Andy borolb goldy be it a poundy or two
Or tey or twelue or many sommys mo
Andy make hym wane atte leste wey
That of a pounde we coude make twey
It is fals and ay we haue goody hope

It forto do any aftir it we grope
And this science is so fer vs before
We mowe it not lerne though we hade it swore
To ouer take it, it slit alwey so faste
It wol vs make beggars atte laste
Whyle this yeman was thus in his talkynge
This chanon drew hym nere & herde al thinge
Whiche this yeman spak for suspecion
Of memys speche euer had this chanon
For Catoun saith he that gilty is
Demyth al thinge to be spoke of hym ywis
That was the cause he gan so nygh drawe
To this yeman to herkyn al his sawe
And thus he sayde to his yoman tho
Holde thou thy pees and speke wordis nomo
For yf thou do thow shalt it dere abye
Thou sklaundrist me here in this companye
And eke discouerist that thou sholdest hyde
Ye quod our ost tel on what so betyde
Of al his thretynge recke thou not a myte
In feith quod he nomore I do but a lyte
And whan this chanon saw it wold nat be
But that his yeman wolde telle his priuyte
He fledde away for verry sorou and shame
A ha quod the yeman here shal ryse a game
For it is erneste to me be my feith
That fele y wel what that ony man saith
And yet for al my smert and al my greef
For al my sorou labour and myschief

I wude neuer leue it m no wyse
Nolb wolde to gody my wit wolde suffise
To tellyn al that longith to that art
But natheles you wol I telle a part
Syn that my lozdy is goon I wol not spare
Suche thingy as I knowe I wol declare
Here endith the prology Andy begynneth
the tale of the Chanons yemany.

Ith this Chanoy I duellidy.vij.yeer
Andy of his science am I neuer the neer
That I hade I haue lost ther by
Andy goy woot so haue mo thay I
There as I was wont to be right fresh & gay
Of clothinge andy of other goody aray
Nolb may I were ay hose vp oy myn hedy
Andy there my colour was bothe fressh & reedy
Nolb it is way andy of a ledyn helwe
Who so it vsith sore shal he welwe
Andy of my swynky blent is myn ye
Lo suche auauntage it is to multiplye
That slidynge science hath made me so bare
That I haue no goody where that euer I fare
Andy yet I am endettidy so sore ther by
Of goldy that I borowedy trewly
That whyle I lyue I shal it quyte neuer
Let euery may bewar by me foz ayr
What maner may that castith hym therto
If he continue I holde his thrift y do
Foz helpe me gody ther by shal he not wynne

But enpeire his purs & make his Wittis thynne
And Whan he thrOwlh his madnes and foly
Hath lost his olden goody thrOu Jepardy
Than he excitith other folk therto
To lese her goody as he hym self hath do
For vnto shrewis ioye it is and ese
To haue her felowis in peyne and disese
For thus Was J onys lernyd of a clerk
Of that no charge J Wol speke of our Werk
Whyn We be there as We shal exercise
Our eluysh craft We semyn Wonder Wyse
Our termys been so clergial and queynte
J blowe the fire til my herte queynte
What sholde J telle eche proporcion
Of thingis Whiche We Werkyn vp and down
As on. B. or. Bj. Bncis may Wel be
Of siluer or sum other quantite
And kisy me to telle you the namys
Of orpement brent bonys Jren squamys
That in to powder grounde be ful smal
And in an erthyn pot holw put is al
And salt petir and also papir
Beforne thyse powdris that J speke of here
And Wel y couerid With a lampe of glas
And of muche other thing Whiche þ there Was
And of the pottis and glassis enlutynge
That of the eyr mi3hte passe out no thing
And of the fyre esy and smert also
Whiche that Was maad & of the care & Woo

That ye hadde in our matier sublymynge
And in a malgamynge and Calcenynge
Of quiksiluer I clepid mercury crude
For alle our slightis We can not conclude
Our orpement and sublymyd mercury
Our grounden litarge eke on the perfury
Of eche of theym of vnces a certeyn
Not helpith vs our labour is in veyn
And eek our spiritis assensioun
Ne our maters that liyn al fix adoun
Nolde vs in our Worknynge onys auayle
For lost is al our labour and trauayle
And the coste a twenty deuyl Wey
Is lost Whiche We on it leye
Ther is also ful many another thing
That is to our craft appertenynyng
Though I be ordre hem reherce ne can · By cause ȳ I am but a lewdeman ·
As bool Armoniak Veertgrece boras
And sondry vessellis made of erthe & glas
Our vrynalis and oure descensories
Violis crossolettis and sublimatories
Turokis and Alembikis eke
And other suche dere ynow a leek
Not nedith it to reherce hem alle
Watirs rubyfying and bores galle
Arsenyk sal Armoniak and brymstone
And erbis eek ouse I telle many on
As Egremoigne Valerian and lunarye
And other suche yf me list to tarye

Our lampes bremyng nyght and day
To bryngе aboute our craft yf We may
Our furneys eek of calcynacion
And of Watirs albificacion
Vnsleckid lyme chalk gleir of ay ey
Polvdris dyuers asshis dong pis and cley
Serid pottis salt petir vitriole
And dyuers fyris made of Wode and ole
Sal tartir alcoly and sal preparat
And combust maters and coagulat
Cley maad With hors donge or mānys her or oyle
Of tartre alym glas herme Wort and argule
Roscalgar and other maters embibynge
And eke of our matirs encorporynge
And of our siluer cytrinacion
Our sementynge and also fermentacion
Our Jngottis testes and many mo
I Wol yow telle as me Was taught also
The .iiij. spiritis and the bodyes .vij.
Be ordir as y herde my lord neueyn
The firste spirit quicsiluer clepid is
The seconde orpement the thridde ylWis
Sal armomak and the fourthe brymstone
The bodyes seuyn loke hem here anon
Sol gold is and luna siluer We threpe
Mars Jren Mercury quicsiluer We clepe
Saturnus led and Jubiter is tyn
And Venus copir be my fadir kyn
This cursid craft Who Wol exercise

Ho ſhal no goody haue that he may ſuffiſe
For al the goody he ſpendith ther aboute
He leſe ſhal therof haue J no doute
Who ſo that liſtith bitte his folye
Let hym com forth and lerne to multiplye
And euery man that hath aught in his cofre
Let hym apere and wepe a philoſofir
Preſt or Chanon or ony other wight
Though he ſitte at his book day and nyght
In lernynge of this eluyſſhe nyce lore
Al is in veyn and parde mochil more
Is to lerne alewdy man this ſubtilte
Fy ſpek not ther of it wol not be
And yan he lettrure or can he none
As in effect he ſhal fynde it allone
For bothe two be my ſauacion
Concludyn in multiplicacion
Al liche weel when they haue al y do
This is to ſeyn they fayley bothe two
Yet forgat J to make reherſayll
Of watris corroſifff and of lymayll
And of bodijs mollificacion
And alſo of her induracion
Oylis ablacions metaill fuſibill
To telle you al it wold passe ony bibyl
That oughere is therfore as for the beſt
Of thyſe namys nowe wol J me reſt
For as J trowe J haue told y nowe
To reyſe a fynde al loke he neuer ſo rowe

A nay let be the philosophris stoon
Elixer we clepyn we sekyn fast echon
For hadde we hym than were we sikir Inowe
But vnto goon of heuyn I make auowe
For al our craft when we haue al y do
And al our sleyghte he wol not come vs to
He hath maad vs spende muche goon
For sorowe therof almost we weyen woon
But that goon hope crepith in our herte
Supposing euer though we soze smerte
To be releuyd by hym afterwarde
Suche suppose I hope is hard
I warne you weel it is to seken eyr
That future temps hath made me disseuyr
In truste wher of al that euer they hadde
Yet of that art they come not weye sad
For vnto hem it is a bitir swete
So semyth it for ne had they but a shete
Whiche that mighte wrappyn hem ymme a night
And a brate to walkyn ymme be day light
They wolde it selle and spende it in this craft
They can not stynte til nothing belaft
And euermoze where eyr that they goon
Mey may hem keme be smel of brymstoon
For al the worlde they stynkyn as a goot
Her sauour is so rammysh and so hoot
That though a may a myle from hem be
The sauour wol infecte hem trustith me
Lo thus by smellyng and thredbare aray

1 from

If that men list thyse folk knowe they may
And yf a man wol aye hem priuely
Why they be clothid so vnthriftely
Right anon they wol wume in his ere
And sayen yf that they aspyed were
Men wolde hem sle be cause of her science
Lo thus this folk betraien Jnocence
Pas ouer this J go my tale vnto
Er that the pot be on the fyre yoo
And metallis a certeyn quantite
My lozd hem temprith and noman but he
Nolb is he goon J dar sey boldely
For as men say he can do craftly
Algate J woot wel he hath suche a name
And yet ful ofte he temyth in the blame
And whyte ye holb ful ofte it farith so
The pot to brekith and farwel al is do
The metallis been of so greet violence
Our wallis molbe not make hem resistence
But yf they were wrought of lym and stoon
They persyn so and thorolb the wal they goon
And some of hem synke doun in to the grounde
Thus haue we lost betyme meny a pounde
And some ar shateryd al the floor aboute
Some leppyn into the fire wythouten doute
Though y the fendy in our sighte him not shelbe
J trolb that he with vs be that ilke shrelbe
In helle where he is lozdy and sire
Ne is ther moze wo rancour ne Jre

Whan that our pot is broken as I haue ſaid
Euery man chit and holdith hym ayl apaid
Some ſaide it was of the fyre making
Some ſayde nay it was of the blowynge
Than was y ferd for that was myn office
Straw quod he ye be lewd and nyce
It was not temprid as it ought to be
May qd the fourthe ſtynt and herkenyth me
Be cauſe our fyre was nat maad of leche
That is the cauſe and other none ſitheche
I can not telle where on it was a longe
But wel I woot gret ſtrif is hs among
What quod my lord ther is nomore to doon
Of theſe parellis I wil be waar eftſoon
I am right ſiker that the pot was craſid
Be as be may be ye not amaſid
As vſage is leet ſwepe the floor ſwithe
Pluk vp your hertis and be glad and blithe
The mullok on an heep ſwepid was
And on the floor caſt a Canuas
And al the mullok in a ſyve y throwe
And ſiftid and pikid many a throwe
Parde quod on ſumwhat of our metal
Yet is there though we haue not al
And though this thinge mishappid hath as nowe
Another tyme it may be wel ynowe
We put our goody in auenture
A marchaunt parde may not alwey endure
Triſtith me wel in his proſperite

Somtyme his godis ley drenchidy in the se
Andy somtyme it comyth sauf vnto londe
Pes quod my lordy the nept tyme J wyl fonde
To bryngе our craft al in another plyte
Andy but J do sirs let me haue the wyte
Ther was a defaute in somy what wel J woot
Anothir sayde the fyre was ouyr hoot
But be it hoot or colde J dar say this
That we concludey euer more amys
We fayley allway of that we woldyn haue
Andy in our madnes euer more we raue
Andy whay we be to gedir euerichone
Euery may semyth as wyse as Salamon
But althingy whiche that shyneth as goldy
Jt is no goldy as J haue here toldy
Ne euery appyl that is fair at ye
Nys not goody what so euer meny aye
Right so it farith amongis vs
He that semyth wiseste be swete Jesus
Js most fool whey it comyth to the preef
Andy he that semyth trewist is a theef
That shal ye knowe or that J from you wende
Be that my tale be toldy vnto ay ende
Ther is a chauoy of Religion
Amongis vs wolde infect al a toun
Though it were as gret as was nynyue
Rome Alisaundre Troye or other thre
His sleyghtis andy his infinit falsnes
Ne coude nomay writey as J ges

Thogh that he mighte lyue a thousandy yeer
In al the Worlde of falsnes nys his peer
For in his termys he Wil hym so Wynde
And speke his Wordis so slily and so kynde
Whan he comen schal With ony Wight
That he Wol make hym dote anon right
But it a fendy be as hym self is
Ful many a man hath he begilidy er this
And Wol yf he lyue may a Whyle
And yet men ryde and goon many a myle
Hym forto seke and haue his aqueyntaunce
Not knowynge of his fals gouernaunce
And yef you list to yeue me audience
I Wil it telle here in your presence
But Worshipful chanons religious
Ne demyth not that I slaundir your hous
Al though my tale of a Chanon be
Of euery ordre sum shrewe is parde
As ody forbede that al a Companye
Sholde ewe a singuler mannys folie
To sklaunder you is no thingy myn entent
But to correcte is that I ment
This tale Was not only told for you
But eek for othir mo I Wot Wel howe
But among cristis apostlis twelue
Ther Was no traitour but Judas hym selue
Than Why sholde the remenant haue a blame
That giltlees Were be you I say the same
Saue only this yf ye Wol herkyn me

If ony Judas in your couent be
Remaynth hym betymes I you rede
Yf shame or los causyn ony drede
And be no thing displesid I you pray
But in this caas herkyn what I say
IN london was a preest a manueler
That there ynne hadde duelt many a yeer
Whiche was so plesaunt and so sermisable
Vnto the wyf where as he was at table
That she wolde suffre hym no thing to pay
For bord ne clothing wente he neuer so gay
And spending silver hadde he right ynow
Wherof no force I wol procede as now
And telle my tale forth of the chanon
That broughte this preest to confusion
This fals Chanon cam vp on a day
Vnto the prestis chambir where he lay
Beseching hym to lene hym a certeyne
Of gold and he wolde quyte hym ageyn
Lene me a mark quod he but dayes three
At my day I wyl saun fayle quyte it the
And yf so be thou fynde me theme fals
Anothir day hange me by the hals
This preest hym took a mark and ȳ as blithe
And this chanon hym thankid ofte sithe
And took his leue and went forth his wey
And atte thridde day broughte his money
And to this preest he took this gold agayn
Wherof this preest was wonder glad & fayn

Certis quod he nothing anoieth me
To lene a man an nobil or two or thre
Or what thing were in my possessioun
Whan he is so trewe of condicion
That in no wyse he breke wol his day
To suche a man I can not sey nay
What quod this chanon sholde I be untrewe
May that were a thing fallyn of newe
Trewthe is a thing that I wol euer kepe
Into that day in whiche I shal crepe
Into my graue or ellis crist forbede
Beleuyth this as sikir as the crede
God I thanke and in good tyme be it saide
That ther nas neuer man yet euyl payde
For gold ne siluer that he me lente
Ne neuer falshede in my herte I mente
And sir quod he now of my priuyte
Syn ye so goodliche haue be to me
And kidith to me so gret gentilnes
Somwhat to quyte with your kyndenes
I wil you shew yf ye list to here
I wol you teche plener the matere
How I can worken in philosophye
Take good hede ye shul wel seen at ye
That I wil a maistrye do or I goo
Ye sir quod the preest and wol ye so
Mary ther of y pray you hertely
At your comaundement sir trewly
Quod the chanon and ellis crist forbede

Lo how this theef coude his seruise lede
Ful soth it is that suche profrid seruise
Stynketh as witnesseth the olde wyse
And right sone I wol it verifye
In this Chanon wote of al trecherye
That euer more delit hath and gladnes
Suche fendly thoughtis in his herte to expres
How cristis pepyl he may to mischief bringe
God kepe vs from his fals dissimulinge
Nought wiste this prest with whom that he delte
Ne of his harm comyng nothing he felte
O sely preest o sely Innocent
With couetyse anon thou shal be blent
O graceles ful blynd is thy conceit
No thing art thou waar of his disceit
Whiche that this foy shapen hath to the
His wylis his wrenchis thou maist not fle
Wherfore to go to the conclusion
That referrith to thy confusion
Vnhappy man anone I wil me hye
To tellyn thyn vnwit and thy folye
And eke the falsnes of that other wrecche
As ferforth as my conynge wol streche
This Chanon was my lordy ye wolde wene
Sire in feith and he hexen quene
It was another Chanon and not he
That can an hundrid folde more subtilte
He hath betraid folk many a tyme
Of his falsnes it dulleth me to ryme

Euer whan I speke of his falshede
For shame of hym my chekis wexen rede
Algatis they begynnen forto glowe
For rednes haue I non right wel I knowe
In my visage for fumes diuerse
Of metal whiche ye haue herd me reherse
Consumedy and wastidy hath my rednes
Now takith hede of this chanons cursidnes
Sir quod he to the preest lete your man gon
For quicsiluer that we hadde it anon
And lete hym bringe vncis two or three
And when he comyth as fast ye shul se
A wondir thing whiche ye sawh neuer or this
Sire quod the preest it shal be do ywis
The lady his seruaunt sette hym this thing
And he alredy was at his biddinge
And sente hym forth and cam anone ageyn
With this quicsiluer shortly forto seyn
And took the vncis three to the chanon
And he hem leyde wel and faire a doun
And bad the seruaunt colis forto bringe
That he anone mighte go to his werkynge
The colis right anon were y set
And this chanon took out a crosselet
Out of his bosom and shewde it to the preest
This instrument quod he whiche that thou seest
Take in thy hond and put thy self therin
Of this quicsiluer an vnce and begyn
In the name of crist to wexe a philosophir

Ther le ful felbe Whiche J Wolde it profre
To ſhelbe hem thus muche of my ſcience
For here ſhulle ye ſe by experience
That this quikſiluer J Wol mortifye
Right in your ſighte anon Withouten lye
And make it as goode ſiluer and as fyn
As ther is ony in your purs or myn
Or ellis Where and make it malliable
And ellis holde me fals and vnſtabil
Amongis folk for euer to apere
J haue a poudre that coſt me dere
Shal make al goode for it is cauſe of al
My commynge Whiche J you ſhelbe ſhal
Voideth your man and let hym le Without
And ſhit the dore Whylis We be ther aboute
Our priuyte that no man vs aſpye
Whylis that We Worke in this philoſofie
Allas as he bade fulfillide Was in dede
This ilke ſeruaunt anone out yede
And his maiſter ſhitte the dore anon
And to her labour ſpedely they goon
This preeſt at this curſide Chanons biddyng
Vp on the fyre anon ſet this thing
And blew the fyre and biſiede hym ful faſte
And this Chanon in to the croſſelet caſte
A powder not J neuer Where of it Was
J made of chalk or of erthe of glas
Or ſom What ellis Was not Worth a flye
To blynde With this preeſt and bad hym hye

The oolis forto ouchyn al aboue
For in tokenyng that I the loue
Quod this chanon thyn hondis two
Shul werke al thing that here is do
Graunt mercy quod the preest & was right glad
And ouchid the oolis as the Chanon bad
And whyle he busy was this fendly wrecche
This fals chanon the foule fend hym feeche
Out of his bosom toke a brechyn ole
In whiche ful subtilly was made an hole
And ther ynne was put of siluer lamayl
An vnce and stoppid was withouten fayl
The hole with wex to kepe the lymayl yn
And vnderstondith that this fals gyn
Was nat made there but it was maad before
And othir thingis that I you telle shal more
Here aftir whiche that he with hym broughte
Er he cam there hym to begyle he thoughte
And so he dede er that they yede atwyn
Til he hadde ternyd hym he coude not twynne
It dullith me whan I of hym speke
Of his falsshede feyn wolde I me wreke
Yf I wiste how but here and there
He is variaunt he abideth nowhere
But takith hede siris for goddis loue
He took his ole of whiche I spak aboue
And in his hond he bare it priuely
And whylis this preest ouchid besily
The oolis as I you tolde or this

This Chanon sayde frendy ye do amys
This is not wrchidy as it ought to be
But sone it shal amendidy be
Now let me medle therwith but a whyle
For of you I haue pyte by sainte gyle
Ye be right hoot I se how ye swete
Haue here a cloth andy wype alwey the weet
Andy whylis the prest wipidy his face
This Chanon took his role with sory grace
Andy leyde it aboue vpon the mydwarde
Of the crosselet andy blew wel aftirwardy
Tyl that the rolis gan faste to bremme
Now yeue vs drynke quod the Chanon themme
As swithe al shal be wel I vndertake
Sit we doury andy lete vs mery make
Andy whyn that this Chanon his brchyn role
Hady brought andy the lymayl out of the hole
Into the crosselet it fil anon doury
Andy so it muste nedis be resoury
Syn it so euene aboue couchidy was
But therof wist the preest no thingy allas
He demydy al the rolis liche goody
For of the slighte he no thingy vnderstoody
Andy whan this alkamystre saw his tyme
Ryse vp sire preest he saidy anon & stondy byme
Andy for I woot wel yngot haue ye noy
Goth walkith forth andy bryngith a chalkston
For I wol make of it the same shappe
That ay yngot is yf it may happe

And bringe eek with yeu a bolle or a panne
Ful of watir and ye shul wel se thanne
How that our lesynes shal thryue e preue
And yet for ye shal haue no mysbeleue
Ne wrongy conceyt of me in your absence
I wil not be out of your presence
But go with yolle and com with you agayn
The chambir dore shortly forto seyn
They openedy and shit and went hir wey
And forth with hem they took the key
And comen ayen without ony delay
What sholde I tary al the longe day
He took the chalk and shoop it in the wyse
Of an Ingot as I shal you deuyse
I sey he took out of his owen sleue
A teyn of siluer ayl moot he cheue
Whiche that ne was but an vnce of weyghte
And takith hede nowe of his cursidy sleyghte
He shoop his Ingot in lengthe and in brede
Of this teyn without ony drede
So slighly that the preest it not aspiedy
And in his sleue agayn he gan it hyde
And from the fyre he took vp his mater
And in the Ingot he put it with mery cheer
And in to the water kessel he it caste
Whan that hym list and bad the preest as faste
Loke what ther is put in thy hondy and grope
Thou shalt fynde there siluer as I hope
What deuyl of helle sholde it ellis be

Shauyngh of ſiluer yes ſire parde
He put his hondʒ yn andʒ took vp ateyne
Of ſiluer fyne andʒ glads im euery veyne
Blithe Was this preeſt Whʒn he ſy it Was ſo
Goddis bliſſingh andʒ his modʒis alſo
Andʒ alle halowes haue ye ſire Chanon
Saidʒ this preeſt andʒ J here maliſon
But andʒ ye vouchesauf to teche it me
This nobil craft andʒ this ſubtilte
J Wyl be your man im al that euer J may
Quod this Chanon yet Wol J make aſay
The ſeconde tyme that ye molde take hede
Andʒ be expert im this at your nede
Anothir day aſſay im myn abſence
This diſcipline andʒ this crafty ſcience
Lete take another vnce quod he tho
Of quyceſiluer Withoute Wordis mo
Andʒ do therWith as ye haue do oʒ this
With that other Whiche that ſiluer is
The preeſt hym biſieth al that euer he can
To do as this Chanon this curſidʒ man
Comaundidʒ hym andʒ faſte blew the fyre
Forto come to the effect of his deſire
Andʒ this Chanon right im this mene Whyle
Al redy Was this preeſt forto begile
Andʒ foʒ contenaunce im his hondʒ bare
Ay holow ſticke take kepe andʒ beWare
In the ende of Whiche Was ay vnce andʒ moze
Of ſiluer lymayl put as ſaidʒ is before

Was in his cole and stoppid with wey weel
Forto kepe in his lintayl euery deel
And whyle the preest was in his bisynes
This chanon with his sticke gan it dres
To hym anone and his powder cast yn
As he dede erst/the deuyl out of his skyn
Hym turne I prey to god for his falshede
For he was euer fals in thought and dede
And with his sticke aboue his crosselet
That was ordeyned with that fals get
He stirid the coles til al relente began
The wey ayens the fyre as euery man
But it a fool be woot weel it muste nede
And al that in the sticke was out yede
And in the crosselet hastliche fyl
Now gode siris what wil ye bet than wel
Whan that this preest was thus begyled ageyn
Supposinge naught but twolthe soth to seyn
He was so glad I can not expres
In no maner his mirthe and his gladnes
And to the Chanon he profrid eftsone
Body and good ye quod the chanon anone
Though I be poure crafty thou shalt me fynde
I warne the wel yet is thermore behynde
Is ther ony coyn here Ime quod he
Ye quod the preest sir I trowe ther be
Elles go by vs sum and that as swythe
Now gode sire go forth thy wey and hye the
He wante his wey and with his coyn cam

And the Chanon in his hondy it nam
And of that copir he weyedy out an vnce
Al to symple is my tunge to pronounce
As to mynstir of my wit the dulnes
Of this Chanon wce of al cursidnes · dō minister of falshed and doublenesse
He semyd frendly to hem that knewb hym nought
But he was fendly both in worke and thought
It werieth me to telle of his falsnes
And natheles yet wol I it expres
To that entent that men mowbe kewar therby
And for non other cause trewbly
He put this vnce of copir in his crocelet
And on the fyre as swithe he it set
And cast yn powder & made the preest to blowbe
And in his worbynge for to stoupe lowbe
As he dede er and al was but a Jape
Right as hym list the preest he made his ape
And after in the yngot he it cast
And in the pame put it atte last
Of watir and yn he put his owben hondy
And in his sleue as ye he forth handy
Herde me telle he hadde of siluer a teyne
He slighly took it out this cursidy heyn
Vnwetynge of the preest of this fals craft
And in the pannys botom he it laft
And in the watir rumbelith to and fro
And wondir priuely took it vp also
The copir teyn nat knowynge the preest
And hidy it and hym hent be the brest

And to hym spak and thus he sayde in game
Stoupith a doun be good ye be to blame
Help me nowh as ye didy Whyle eer
Put in your hondy and lokith What is there
This preest took vp this siluer teyn anon
And than sayde the chanon leet vs goon
With thyse thre teynes which p̄ we haue Wrought
To som goldsmyth to loke yf they be aught
For by my feith I nolde for myn hoody
But yf it Were siluer fyne and goody
And that as swithe preuydy it shal be
Vnto the goldsmyth With thyse teynes thre
They Wente and put hem in assay
To fire and hamyr might no man say nay
But that they Were as hem ought to be
This sottidy preest Who Was gladder than he
Was neuer bridy gladder ayenst the day
Ne nyghtyngale in the seson of may
Was neuer noon that best list to synge
Ne lady lustier in carolinge
Or forto speke of loue or Wommanhede
Ne knyght in armys done a lusty dede
To stondey in grace of his lady dere
Than hadde this preest this craft forto lere
And to the Chanon thus he spak anon sayde
That for the loue of godh that for vs alle deyde
As I may deserue it vnto yolh
What shal this receyt coste tel me nolh
Be our lordy quod this Chanon it is dere

I warne you wel saue I and a freere
In Engelond can no man it make
No force quod he nold sire for goddis sake
What shal I paye tel me I you pray
Wbis quod he it is ful dere I say
Sire at o word yf that it list you haue
Ye shul paye .vl. pound so god me saue
And nere the frendship that ye did or this
To me sholde ye paye more ywis
This preest the summe of .vl. pound anone
Of noblis set and took hem euerichone
To this Chanon for this ilke receit
Al his workyng was but fraude and disceit
Sire preest he sayde I kepe to haue no loos
Of my craft for I wol kepe it cloos
And as ye loue me kepe ye it secre
For yf men knewe al my subtilte
Be god they wolde haue so gret enuye
To me be cause of my philosophie
I sholde be ded ther were non other wey
God it forbede quod the preest what ye sey
Yet hadde I leuer spende al the good
Whiche that I haue or ellis were I wood · ff
Than that ye sholde falle in suche a myschief · ffor yowre good ff haue yo ryght good
va Weel sire haue ye wel good preef cat
Quod this Chanon and farewel grant mercy
And went his wey and neuer the preest hym sy
Aftir that day whey that this preest sholde
Makyn assay suche tyme as he wolde

Of this receyt farewel it wolde not be
Lo thus beiapidy and begylidy was he
Thus makith he his introduction
To bringe folk to her destruction
Considerith siris how that in eche astat
Getwix men and goldy ther is debaat
So ferforth that Ymethis is ther noon
This multiplynge blindith so many one
That in goody feith y trowe that it be
The cause grettist of suche scarsite
Thyse philosophris spekyn so mistily
In this craft that men can nat com therby
For ony wit that men wolde haue now a dayys
They wolde wel chateryn as doon Jayys
And in her termys settyn her lust and peyn
But to her purpos shul they neuer atteyne
A man may lightly lerne yf he haue aught
To multiplye and bringe his goody to naught
Lo whiche a lucre is in this lusty game
A mamys mirthe it wol turne vnto grame
And empte also grete and heuy pursis
And makyn folk forto purchace cursis
Of hem that haue her goody to hem lent
O fy for shame tho that haue be brent
Alas can they not fle the fyris hete
Ye that it vse I rede that ye it lete
Lest that ye lese al for bet than neuer is late
Neuer to thryue were to longe date
Though ye prolle euer neuer shul ye it fynde

Ye be as bold as is baiard the blynde
That blundrith forth and paril castith none
He is as bolde to renne ayens a stone
As forto go besidis in the wey
So farey ye that multiplye I sey
Yf that your yey can not se a right
Loke that your mynde lak not his sight
For though that ye loke right brood & stare
Ye shul wynne neuer of that chaffare
But waste al that ye molde rappe and renne
Withdrawb the fyre lest it to faste brenne
Medlith nomore with that art I mene
For yf ye do your thrift is gon ful clene
And right as swithe I wol you telle here
What philisophris didy in this matere
Lo thus saith Arnolde of the newb toun
As his Rosary makith mencioun
He saith right thus withouten ony lye
Ther may noman mercury mortify
But yf it be by his brotheris knowlechinge
Lo howb that he withsayde this thinge
Of philisophris fadir was hermes
He saith howb that the dragon doutles
Ne dieth not but yf that he be sleyn
With his brothir and that is forto seyn
Be the dragon mercury and non other
He vnderstondeth & brymston be his brother
That out of sol and luna were I drawbe
And therfore sayde he take hede to my sawbe

Leet nomay bisy hym this art forto seche
But he the entencion and the speche
Of philosophris vnderstonde can
And yf he do he is a lewd man
For this science and this kunnyng sayd he
Is of the secret of secretis parde
Also ther was a discipil of plato
That on a tyme sayde his maistir to
As his book homer wol bere witnes
And this was his demaunde in sothfastnes
Tel me the name of that priuy stoon
And plato answerd to hym anon
Take the stoon that thitanes men name
Whiche is that quod he magnacia is the same
Sayde plato ye sir is it thus
This is ignotum per ignocius
What is magnacia gode sire I you prey
It is a watir that is maad I sey
Of elementis foure quod plato
Tel me the rote gode sir quod he tho
Of that watir yf it be your wille
Nay nay quod plato certeyn that I nylle
The philosophris were swor̃ euerichone
That they sholde discure it to noon
Ne in no book it writyn in no manere
For vnto gode it is leef and dere
For he wol nat that it discurid be
But where it likith to his deyte
May to enspire and eek vnto defende

Whan that hym likith lo this is the ende
Than conclude I thus sith that godys of heuyn
Ne wol nat that the philisophris neuyn
Hold that a man shal come vnto this stoon
I rede as for the beste let it goon
For who so makith godys his aduersary
As forto worchyn ony thing in contrary
Of his wil neuer shal he thryue
Though that he multiplye terme of his lyue
And there a poynt for endid is my tale
Godys sende euery goodys man bote of his bale

Here endith the tale of the Chanons
yeman of multiplicacon and begynneth
the tale of the doctour of phisik.

THer was as telleth titus liuyns
A knyght that clepid was Virginius
Fulfilled of honour and of worthynes
Stronge of frendis and of riches
A doughter he hadde be his wyff
And neuer hadde he mo in al his lif
Fair was this mayde of excellent beaute
Abouen euery wight that men might se
For nature hath with souereyn diligence
Fourmed her in so greet excellence
As though she wolde say lo I nature
Thus can I fourme and peynte a creature
Whan that me list who can me countrefete
Pigmaleon not though he forge and bete
Or graue or peynt for I dar wel seyn

Appollus Zephirus shold Wirche in Seyn
To graue or peynte or forge or lete
If they presumpdy me to countirfete
For he that is the fourmour principal
Hath maady me his Vicair general
To fourme andy peynte euericke erthly creature
Right as me list for al thingy is in my cure
Vnder the mone that may Wane andy Wepe
And for my Werk no thingy Wol I axe
My lorde andy I be fully of accorde
I made here to the Worshipp of my lordy
So do I alle myn othir creaturis
Of What colours they be or What figuris
Thus semyth me that nature Wolde say
This mayde Was of .vij. yeer age andy tWey
In Whiche that nature hady suche delit
For right as he can peynte a lily Whit
And rody as a Rose With suche peynture
She peyntidy hath this nobil creature
Er she Was vp on her limys fre
Were al so bright as suche colouris might be
And Phebus diedy hade her tressis grete
Lik to the stremys of his burnydy hete
And yf that excellent Was her beaute
A thousandy foldy more vertuous Was she
In her ne lackith no condicion
That is to preyse ay be discrecion
As Wel in body as goste chast Was she
For Whiche she flouridy in Virginite

With alle humylite and abstinence
With al attempaunce and pacience
With mesure eek and kerynge of aray
Discret she was in answerynge alwey
She was as wyse as pallas dare I seyn
Her facunde eek ful womanly and pleyn
None countirfetid termys had she
To seme wyse but aftir her degre
She spak and alle her wordis more and les
Sobrynge in kertu and in gentilnes
Shamefast she was in maydens shamfastnes
Constant in herte and euer in besynes
To dryue her out of her slogardry
Bacus hadde of her mouth no maistrye
For wil and thought doth semus encrece
As men in fyre wol caste oyl or grece
And of her olwey kertu bnoonstreynyd
She hath ful ofte tymes here syk feynyd
For that she wolde fle the companye
Where lightly was to trete of foly
As is at festis reuellis and daunsis
That ben occasions of daliaunces
Suche thyngis make childryn forto be
To sone ripe and bold as men may se
Whiche is ful parlous and hath ben yore
For al to sone may she lerne lore
Of boldnes whan she is a wyf
And ye maistresses in your olde lif
That lordis doughtris haue in gouernaunce

Ne takith of my wordis no displesaunce
Thingis that been set in gouernaunce
Of lordis doughtris only for two thingis
Eythir forto kepe your honeste
Or ellis ye haue falle in freelte
Andy knolbe wel y nolb the olde daunce
Andy conne forsake fully myschaunce
For euermore/therfore for cristis sake
Kepe wel tho that ye haue vndertake
A theef of kenesoy that hath forlaft
His likorousnesse andy al his theuys craft
Can kepe a forest best of ony may
Nolb keep hem wel for andy ye wil ye can
Lokith wel to no vice that ye assente
Lest ye dampnydy be for your cuyl entente
For who so doth a treytour is certeyn
Andy takith hede of that I schal seyn
Of alle treson souereyn pestilence
Is whey a wight betraieth Jmocence
Ye fadris andy ye modris also
Thogh ye haue childryn one or two
Youre is the charge of al her sufferaunce
Whylis they been in ignoraunce
Bewaar by ensamplis of your liuynge
Othir be negligent in chastisinge
That they ne pissh for I dar wel seye
If that they do ye schul it dere abeye
Vnder a shepherde softe andy negligent
The wolf hath many a sheep to rent

Suffisith ensaumplis I nowe as here
For I muste turne ayen to my matere
This mayde of whiche I telle expres
She kepte her self she nedith no maistres
For in her tiuynge maydens myghte rede
As in a book euery worde in dede
That longith to amayde vertuous
She was so prudent and so bownteuous
For whiche out sprongh on euery syde
Bothe of her bounte and of her beaute wyde
That thorwh the londe they preysen hir echone
That louedy vertu saue enuye alone
That sory is of othir mennys weel
And glady is of his sorwh and vnsele
This doctour makith this discripsion
This mayde wente in to the toun
Towardy the tempil with her moder dere
As is of yonge maydens the manere
Nowe was ther a Justice in the toun
That gouernour was of that Region
And so besyl this Jugge his yen caste
Vp on this mayde auisingh her ful faste
As she cam forth by there as the Juge stoode
Anone his hert chaungith al his moode
So was he caught with beaute of this mayde
And to hym self ful priuely he sayde
This mayde shal be myn for ony may
Anone the fende in to his herte ran
And taughte hym sodenly be what sleighte

The mayden to his purpos Wynne he mighte
For certis by no fors ne by no mede
Hym thoughte he Was not abyl forto spede
For she Was strong of frendis and eek she
Confermyd Was in suche souereyn beaute
That Wel he Wiste he might her nat Wynne
As forto make her With her body to synne
For Whiche With gret deliberacion
He sente aftir a chorl in the toun
The Whiche he knelw ful subtil and ful boldy
This Juge Vnto this chorl this tale hath told
In secret Wyse and made hym to assure
He sholde telle it to no creature
And yf he dede he sholde lese his hedy
Whey assentid Was this cursid dedy
Glady Was the Juge and made glady chere
And yaf hym yeftis precious and dere
Whey shapyn Was al this conspiracye
From poynt to poynt how that his lecherye
Parfourmyd shulde be ful subtilly
As ye shullyn here al openly
Hoom goth this chorl that highte claudius
This fals Juge that highte appius
So Was his name for it is no fabil
But knowen for an historial thing notabil
The sentence of it soth is out of doute
This fals Juge goth now faste aboute
To hastyn his delyte al that he may
And so befyl sone aftir on a day

This fals Juge as tellith vs the story
As he was wont sat in his consistory
And yaf his domys vp on sondry caas
This fals chorle cam forth a ful gret paas
And sayde lordy yf it be your Wille
As doth me right vp on my pitous bille
In Whiche I pleyne vp on Virginius
And yf that he Wil sey it is not thus
I Wil preue it and fynde goody Witnes
That soth is that my bille Wol expres
The Juge answeridy of this in his absence
I may not yeue diffinyte sentence
Leet do calle hym and I Wol gladly here
Thou shalt haue right and no Wrongy here
Virginius cam to here the Justices Wille
And right anone Was redy this cursid bille
The sentence Was therof as ye shul here
To you my lordy Appius so dere
SheWith your poure seruaunt Claudius
Holde that a knyght callidy Virginius
Ayenst the lawe and ayenst al equyte
Holdith expres ayens the Wil of me
My seruaunt Whiche that is my thralle be right
Whiche from myn hous Was stolyn on a nyght
Whylis she Was ful yongy I Wol it preue
Be Witnes lordy so that ye nat greue
She nys nat his doughter What so he say
Wherfore my lordy Justice I you pray
Yelde me my thral yf it be your Wille

Lo this was al the sentence of his bille
Virginius gan vp on the chorle beholde
But hastilye er he his tale tolde
He wolde a defendid it as shulde a knyght
And by witnes of many a trewe wight
That al was fals that sayde his aduersary
This cursid Juge wolde no lenger tary
Ne here a wordy more of Virginius
But yaf his Jugement and said thus
I deme anone this chorl his seruaunt haue
Thou shalt no lenger in thy hous her saue
Go set her forth and put her in our warde
This chorle shal haue his thral thus I warde
And when this worthy knyght Virginius
Thorow the assent of the Juge apius
Muste before his dere doughter yeuyn
Vnto the Juge in lechery to lyuyn
He goth hym hoom and set hym in his halle
And lete anon his dere doughter calle
And with a face ded as asshis colde
Vp on her humbil face he gan beholde
With fadris pite stikyng thorou his herte
Al wol he not from his purpos conuerte
Doughter quod he Virginea by thy name
Ther been two weyys othir deth or shame
That thou must suffir allas that I was boze
For neuer thou deseruest wherfore
To dien with a sword or with a knyf
O dere doughter whiche that al my lyf

I haue fostrid vp with suche plesaunce
That thou ne were out of my remembraunce
O doughter whiche that art my laste woo
And in my lif my laste ioye also
O gemme of chastite in pacience
Take thou thy deth for this is my sentence
For loue and nat for hate thou must be ded
My pitous hond muste smyte of thy hed
Allas that euer Apius the say
Thus hath he Juged the to day
And tolde hir al the caas as ye before
Haue herd it nedith to telle no more
Mercy dere fadir quod the mayde
And with that worde she both her armys leyde
Aboute his necke as she was wont to do
The teris brast out of her yen two
And sayde gode faxer shal I dye
Is ther no grace is ther no remedy
No certis dere doughter myn quod he
Than yeue me leue fadir myn quod she
My deth to compleyne a litil space
For pardé Jaffa zaf his doughter grace
For to compleyne or he her slow alas
And god it woot no thing was her trespas
But that she ran her fader for to se
To welcome hym with gret solempnite
And with that worde she fyl a swoune anone
She ristith vp and to her fader sayde
Blessid be god that I shal dye a mayde

Yef me my deth or that J haue a ſhame
Doth With your childy your Wil a goddis name
Andy With that Worde ſhe praieth ful ofte
That With his ſWerdy he ſholde ſmyte ſofte
Andy With that Wordy a ſWonne downy ſhe fyl
Her fadre With ſorouful herte andy fel
Here hedy of ſmoot andy by the top it hent
Andy to the Juge he yaf it in preſent
As he ſat in his dome in conſiſtory
Whey that the Juge it ſalW as ſaith the ſtory
He bady take hym andy hange hym al ſo faſte
But right anone al the pepil in thraſte
To ſaue the knyght for rolWthe andy for pite
For knolWey Was the fals iniquyte
The pepyl anony bady ſuſpect in this thingy
By maner of this chorlis iangelingy
That it Was by aſſent of appius
They Wiſte Wel that he Was lecherous
Forth With Vnto this appius they goy
Andy caſt hym in priſony andy that anon
Where as he ſlolW hym ſelf andy Claudius
That ſeruaunt Was Vnto appius
Was demydy forto be hongidy Vp ony a tre
But Virginius of his grete pyte
Prayde for hym that he Was evilidy
Andy ellis certis hady he be begilidy
The remenaunt Were hongidy bothe more & leſſe
That conſentidy Were to this curſidnes
Here may mey ſe holW ſymme hath his merite

Beth Waar for nomay Woot holb godz Wol smyte
In no degre ne ím no maner Wyse
The Worm of conscience Wol a ryse
Of Wickidz lif though it so priuy be
That nomay Woot of but godz andz he
Whethir that he be lelbz may or leridz
He noot holb sone he may be a feridz
Therfore I rede you this counsel take
Forsake synne or synne you forsake
¶ Here endith the Phisicions tale. Andz
begynneth the Pardoneris prologz.
Our oste gan swere as he were Woodz
Harolb quod he be naylis andz be bloodz
This Was a fals thef a cursidz Justice
As shameful deth as herte can deuyse
So falle on his bodz andz on his bonys
To the deuyl I betake hym attonys
Allas to dere boughte she her beaute
Wherfore I say that al menz molb se
That yeftis of fortune andz of nature
Been cause of the deth of many a creature
Her beaute Was her deth I dar Wel sayn
Allas so pitously as she Was slayn
But here of Wol I not procede as nolb
Men haue ful ofte moze harm thanz prolb
But trewly myn olben maister dere
This is a pitous tale forto here
But natheles passe ouer is no force
I pray to godz so saue thy gentil corps

And thyn brynals and thy Jourdens
Thyn Jporas and thyn galons
And euery boy ful of letuary
God blisse hem and our lady seynte mary
So mote J the thou art a propir man
And lik a prelat by saint dampan
Thou hast spoke ynough J can not sey in terme
But wel J wot thou makist myn herte to erme
That almost J haue caught a Cardiakil
Be corpus dominus but yf J haue tryakil
Or ellis a draughte of corny moysty ale
Or but J here anon amery tale
My herte is lost for pite of this mayde
Thou belamy John pardoner he sayde
Tel vs sum mirthis or Japis right anon
It shal be do he sayde by seynt Runyon
But first quod he here at this ale stake
J wol bothe drynke and ete of a Cake
But right anon thyse gentils began to crye
Nay let hym telle vs of no vilanye
Tel vs sum moral thing that we mowe lere
Som wit and than wol we gladly here
J graunte ywis quod he but J muste thynke
Vpon sum honest thing whylis that J drynke
Here endith the Pardoners prologh.
And begynneth the Pardoners tale.
Lordings quod he in chirchis when J preche
J peyne me to haue an haunteu speche
Tryng it out as roundy as goth a belle

For I can be wote al that I telle
My teme is euer one and3 albey bas
Radix malo3 est cupiditas
First I pronounce whens that I come
And3 than my billis shelbe I alle and3 some
Our liege lo3dis seal is my patent
That shelbe I first my body to warent
That no man be so bolde ne preest ne clerk
Me to distourbe of cristis holi werk
And3 aftir that telle I forth my talis
Bullis of popis and3 of Cardinalis
Of patriarkis and3 Bisshoppis I shelbe
And3 in latyn I speke wo3dis a felbe
To sauery3 with my predicacioun
And3 fo3to stere men to deuocioun
They shelbe I forth my longe cristal stones
I cramyd3 in cloutis ful of bonys
Relikes they been as wenyn they echon
Than haue I in latoun a sholdir bon
Whiche that was an holy iewis schep
Gode men say I take of my wo3dis keep
If that this boon be washe in ony welle
Yf bolle or calf schep or oxe swelle
That ony wo3m hath ete or hym stonge
Touche he this boon anone he shal be sounde
And3 yet also more ferthirmore
Of pokkis and3 of scabbis and3 euery sore
Shal euery schep be hool that of this welle
Drynketh a draughte take kepe of that I telle

Wol euery wight or that the wok owbeth
And wold do ony thing that hym owbeth
Fastynge drynke of this welle a draughte
As that holy Jelb our eldris taughte
His bestis and his stoor shal multiplye
And syris also it helith ielousie
And though a may befalle in gelous rage
Leet make with this watir his potage
And neuer shal he more his wyf mystryste
Though he the defaute by her wiste
Al hadd she take prestis two or three
Here is a meteyn eek ye may se
He that his hondy wol put in that meteyn
He shal haue multiplyyng of his greyn
Whan he hath sowen be it whete or otys
So that he offre pens or ellis grotis
And men and women o thing warne I yow
If ony wight be in this chirche now
That hath don synne horrible that he
Dar not for shame shryuyn be
Or ony woman be she yong or olde
That hath ymaad her husbond cokeolde
Suche folk shal haue no power ne grace
To offrir to my relikes in this place
And who so fyndith hym out of suche blame
Comyth vp and offrir in goddis name
And I assoyle hem by the auctorite
Suche as by bulle was grauntid me
By this gaude haue I wonne many a yeer

Ay hundrid mark ſyn I was pardoner
I ſtonde lik a clerk in many a pulpet
And ſhelde lewd pepyl and down they ſet
I preche ſo as ye haue herd before
And telle ay hundrid japis more
Thay peyne I me to ſtreche forth myn necke
And est and west vp on the pepyl I becke
As doth a dowue ſittynge vpon a bern
Myn hondis and my tonge gon ſo yern
That it is ioye to ſe my beſines
Of auarice and ſuche curſidnes
Is al my prechinge to make hem fre
To yeue her pens and namely vnto me
For myn entent is not but for to wynne
And no thing for correction of ſynne
I recke not when that they be beried
Though her ſoulis goon a blakeberied
For certis many a predicacion
Comyneth ofte tyme of cuyentencion
Some for pleſaunce of folk and for flaterye
To hey auaunced be ypocriſie
And ſom for veyneglory and ſom for hate
For when I dar not other whyle debate
Thay wol I ſtynge hem with my tonge ſmerte
In prechinge ſo that they ſhul not aſterte
To hey diffamed falſly yf that he
Hath treſpaſſid oght to my bretheryn or me
For though I telle not his proper name
Men ſhal wel knowe it is the ſame

By ſymonye or by othir circumſtaunces
Thus quyte I folk that doth vs displeſaunces
Thus ſpit I out my venym vnder hewe
Of holynes to ſeme holy and trewe
But ſhortly myn entent I wol reuyse
I preche of no thing but of couetyſe
Therfore my teme is yet and euer was
Radix oim malox eſt cupiditas
Thus gay I preche the ſame wyſe
To ſuche as be vſyng the ſyn of aueryſe
But though my ſelf be gilty in that ſynne
Yet can I make other folk to thynne
From auarice/and ſore to repente
But that is not my principal entente
I preche no thing but for couetyſe
Of this mater it ought ynow ſuffyſe
Than telle I of enſamplis many on
Of olde ſtoryes/longe tyme agoon
For lewd peppl louyn talis olde
Whiche thingis can they weel expoune & holde
What trow ye whylis that I may preche
And ſore to wynne gold & ſiluer ſore to teche
That I wil lyue in pouert wilfully
Nay nay I thoughte it neuer trewly
For I wol preche and begge in ſondry londis
I wil not do no labour with my hondis
And make baſkettis and lyue therby
Be cauſe I wol not begge idelly
I wil non of the apoſtolis countirfete

Al were it yeuyn of the poreſt page
Or of the poreſt widow in a village
Al ſholde her childryn ſterue for famyn
May I wol drynke the licour of the wyn
And haue a roly wenche in euery town
But herkeneth lordingis in concluſion
Your likyng is that I ſhal telle a tale
Now I haue dronke a draughte of corny ale
Be god I hope I ſhal telle you a thing
That ſhal by reſon be at your likynge
For though my ſelf be a ful vicious man
A moralle tale yet I you telle can
Whiche I am wont forto preche and alſo wyme
Now holde your pees my tale I wol begynne
IN flaundris ſumtyme was a company
Of yonge folk that haunteden foly
As ryot hazard ſtewis and tauernys
And pleye the harlottis in many hernys
They daunce and pleye atte dyce both day & night
And eten and drynken a bouen her myght
Thorow which they doon the deuyl ſacrifise
With ynne the deuyls temple in curſid wyſe
The ſuperfluytees abhominabil
Here othis be ſo grete and dampnabil
That it is grisly forto here hem ſwere
Our blyſſid lordis body they to tere
Hem thoughte the iewis rente hym not y nough
And eche of hem at othir ſynne lough
And right anone cam the Tombleſteris

Fetis and ſmale and yongh frutestris
Singars with harpis Galdis Wafreris
Suche as been seruy the deuyll officeris
To kyndil and blowe the firis of lecherye
That is annexid vnto glotonye
The holy Wryt take I to witnesse
That lecherye is in Wyne and in dronkenesse
Lo holk that dronkyn Loth vnkyndely
Lay be his doughtris two vnwetyngly
So dronke he was he nyste what he wroughte
And therfore sore repente hym oughte
Herodis who so Wol the storyes seche
There may ye lerne and by ensampil teche
Whan he of Wyne was repleet at his feste
Right at his owen tabil yaf his heste
To sle the Baptist Johy ful giltlees
Senek saith eke gode Wordis doutles
He saith he can no difference fynde
Betwix a man that is our of his mynde
And a man that is dronkelew
But that Woodnes fallyn is in a shrew
Perseueryth lenger than doth dronkenes
O glotenye ful of cursidnes
O cause first of our confusion
O original of our dampnacion
Til crist hadde bought vs with his blody ageyn
Lo holk dere and shortly Was to seyn
A bought Was this cursid vilony
Corupt Was al this Worldy thorou glotony

Adam our fader and̄ his Wyf also
Fro paradys to labour and̄ to Woo
Were dryuen for that vice it is no drede
For Whylis that adam fastid̄ as J rede
He Was in Paradise and̄ Whan that he
Ete of the fruyt defendid̄ on the tre
Anon he Was out cast to Woo and̄ peyne
O glotenye on the oughte vs Wel to pleyne
O Wiste a man how meny maladies
Folowith of excesse and̄ of glotenyes
He sholde be the more mesurabil
Of his diete sittynḡ at his tabil
Allas the short throte the tendir mouth
Makith that est and̄ West North and̄ south
In erthe in eyr in Watir men to swynke
To gete a gloton mete and̄ drynke
O Poule of this mater Wel canst thou entrete
Mete vnto Wombe and̄ Wombe vnto mete
Shal god̄ destroien bothe as Poule saith
Allas a foul thinḡ it is be my feith
To say this Worde and̄ foulir is the dede
Whan men so drynkith of the White and̄ rede
That of his throte he makith his pryue
Thowh that aursid̄ superfluyte
The apostil Wepynge saith ful pitously
Ther Walkyn many of Whiche you told̄ haue J
I say it now Wepynhe With pitous vois
That they been enemyes of cristis crois
Of Whiche the ende is deth the Wombe is her god̄

O Wombe o bely o ſtynkynge ordy
Fulfillid of dunge and of corrupcion
At eyther ende of the foul is the ſoun
Holde gret coſt and labour is to fynde
Thyſe cokis holde they ſtampe ſtreyne & grynde
And turne ſubſtaunce in to accident
To fulfille al thy licorous talent
Out of the harde bonys knockyn they
The mary for they caſte naught albey
That may go thorowe the golet ſofte and ſote
Of ſpicery of leuys barke and rote
Shal be his ſauſe ymade by delite
To make hym yet an nelbe appetite
But certis he that haunteth ſuche delicis
Is ded Whylis that he liueth in the vicis
A lecherous thing is wyne and dronkenesſe
Of ſtryuynge and of wrecchidneſſe
O dronkeu man diſſiguriſh in thy face
Foul is thy breth foul art thou to embrace
And thorowe thyn dronkin noſe ſoundeth thy ſoun
As though thou ſaydiſt ay Sampſon Sampſoun
And yet godd woot ſampſon dranke neuer no wyn
Thou fariſt as it were a ſtykidd ſwyn
Thy tonge is loſt and al thyn honeſt cure
For dronkenes is verry ſepulture
Of mannys wit and his diſcrecion
In whom that drynke hath dominacion
He can no counſel kepe it is no drede
Now kepe you fro the whyte and fro the rede

Namely fro the Whyte Wyne of lepe
That is to selle in fisssh strete or in chepe
This Wyne of spayne crepith subtilly
In othir Wynys growyngh fast by
Of Whiche ther risith suche sumosite
That Whey amay hath dronkyn draughtis thre
And Wenyth that he be atte tomme in chepe
He is in Spayne right at the toury of lepe
Not at Rochel ne at bordeux toury
And than Wol he say Sampsoury Sampsoury
But herkenyth lordmgis o Word I you pray
That al the souereyn actis dar I say
Of victories in the olde testament
That thorou fery gody that is omnipotent
Were woy in abstmence andy in praier
Lokith the Bibil andy there ye mowe it lere
Lokith attilla the grete conquerour
Deyde in his sleep With shame andy dishonour
Bledynge ay at his nose in dronkenes
A Capteyn shulde lyue in sobirnes
Andy ouer al this auyse you right Weel
What Was comaundidy vnto lamuel
Nat Samuel but lamuel say I
Redith the Bibil andy fyndy it expresly
Of Wyne yeuynge to hem that haue Justice
Nomore of this for it may Wel suffise
And now that I haue spoke of gloteny
Now Wol I defende you sahardry
Hasardrye is fery moder of lesyngis

And of diſceit aurſid forſweryngis alſo
Of bataylle ofte tyme and of othir mo
It is repreef and contrary vnto honour
Forto beholden a Comune haſardour
And euer the hyer that he is in aſtat
The moze he is holden diſſolate
If that a prince vſe haſardrye
In al gouernaunce and al polecye
He is as by comune oppinion
Yholde the laſſe in reputacion
Stillebone that was holde a wyſe Embaſſetour
Was ſent in to garnathe with gret honour
Fro Calidone to make hem alliaunce
And whan he cam hym happith this chaunce
That alle the grettiſt that were of that londe
Pleyynge atte haſarde he hem fonde
For whiche as ſone as that it mighte be
He ſtale hym hoom ayeen to his contre
And ſayde there wil I not leſe my name
I wol not take on me ſo gret defame
You forto a lye to non haſardouris
Sendith other wyſe ambaſſiatouris
For be my trouthe me were leuer dye
Than I you to haſardouris ſhulde a lye
For ye that been ſo glorious in honouris
Shal not a lye you to haſardouris
As by my wil ne as by my trete
This wyſe philoſophir thus ſayd he
Loke thou vſe no pley of dyſe in thy hous

Loke eke how the kynge Emetrus
Sente hym a peyre of dyse in scorn
For he hadde vsed hasardrye ther he forn
For Whiche he held his glorye and his renoun
At no value as of reputacioun
Lordis mighten fynde othir maner pley
Honest ynough to dryue the day awey
NOw wol I speke of othis fals and grete
A Wordy or two as many lokes trete
Greet sWeringe is thinge abhominabil
And fals sWeringe is a thinge more reprouable
The high god forbad sWeringe at all
Witnes of Matheu but in special
Of sWeringe saith holi Jhewmpe
Thou shalt sWere soth thyn othis and not lye
And sWere in dome and in rightWisnes
But ydil sWeringe is a cursidnes
Behold and se that in the firste tabil
Of high goddis hestis honourabil
How that the seconde heste of hym is this
Take not myn name in ydilnes amys
Lo rather he forbedith suche sWeringe
Or hompyday or ony other cursid thinge
I say as he orde thus it stondith
This knowith they þ his hestis vnderstondith
Hou that the seconde heste of god is that
And furthirmore I Wil the telle at plat
That vengeaunce shal not parte from the hous
That of his othis is outrageous

Ey be goddis precyous herte & be his naylis
And by his blody that is in haylis
Sauyn is my chaunce and thyn is fyue & thre
Ey goddis armys yf thou falsly pley with me
This daggar shal thorow thyn herte go
This fruyt comyth of the bichidy bonys two
For swerynge Ire falsnes and homicide
Now for the loue of crist that for vs dide
Leuith your othis both grete and smale
For cristis sake and herkenyth my tale
Thyse ryotours three of whiche I telle
Longe or to pryme were wonge ony welle
Were set hem in a tauerne to drynke
And as they sat they herde a belle clynke
Before a cors was caried to his graue
That oon of hem gan calle to his knaue
Go bet quod he and aye redily
What cors is this that passith forth by
And loke that thou reporte his name wel
Sire quod the boy it nedith neuer a deel
It was me told or ye cam here two houris
He was parde an old felow of yours
Al sodenly was he slayn to nyght
For dronke as he sat on his bench vpright
Ther cam a pryue theef men clepe deth
That in this contre al pepil sleth
And with his spere he smot his herte in two
And went his wey with oute wordis mo
And maistir er ye come in his presence

He hath a thousandy ſleyn this peſtelence
Me thinkith it were neceſſary
Forto kepaar of ſuche an aduerſary
Deth is redy forto mete hym euermore
Thus taughte me my dame I ſay nomore
O ſeynte mary ſaidy this tauernere
The childy ſaith ſoth for he hath this yere
Hens ouer a myle ſlayn in a gret village
Bothe may andy woman childy andy page
I trowe his habitacion be there
To keen auiſidy gret wiſedom it were
Er that he didy a man a diſhonour
Ye goddis armys ſayde this riotour
Is it ſuche peril with hym forto mete
I ſchal hym ſeke by dale andy eke by ſtrete
I ſchal hym ſle be goddis digne bonys
Harkyn felowis we thre keen alonys
Let ech of vs keomyn othris brother
Andy ech of vs holde vp his hondy to other
Andy we wol ſle this traitour deth
He ſchal be ſlayn he that ſo many ſleth
Be goddis dignite or it be nyght
To gedir haue thyſe thre her fertis hight
To lyue andy dye ilke of theym with othir
As though he were his owen ſwore brothir
Andy vp they ſtert al dronke in this rage
Andy forth they goon towardy that village
Of whiche the tauerner hath ſpoke before
Andy many a griſly oth haue they ſworn

And cristis blissid body they to rente
Deth shal be ded yf that we may hym hente
When they haue goon not fully a myle
Right as they wolde haue goon ouer a style
Ay old poure man with hem mette
This olde man fulle mekely hem grette
And sayde thus lordingis god you se
The proudest of thyse Riotours three
Answerde what charl with hardy grace
Why art thou al forwrappid saue thy face
Why liuyst thou so longe in so gret age
This olde man gan loke in her visage
And sayde thus for I can not fynde
A man though I walke in to ynde
Neyther in cyte ne in village
That wol chaunge his yonthe for myn age
And therfore muste I haue myn age still
As longe tyme as it is goddis will
Ne deth allas wol not haue my lyf
Thus walke I lik a recheles caytiff
And on the grounde whiche is my modris gate
I knocke with my staf erly and late
And say leue modir lete me yn
Lo holk I vanysh flesh blood and skyn
Allas whan shal my bonys be at reste
Modir with you wolde I chaunge my cheste
That in my chambir longe tyme hath be
Ye for ay heir clout to wrappe ynne me
But yet to me she wol not do that grace

For whiche ful pral & wreechidy is my face
Andy seris to you it is no curtesie
To speke to ay olde may vilony
But y trespasse othir in wordy or in dede
Ye may your self in holy writ rede
Ayenst ay olde may hore vp on his heedy
Ye sholde a ryse wherfore J you rede
Ne doth to noy olde may harm nolh
Nomore thay ye wolde mey dide to you
In age yf ye sholde longe abyde
Andy gody be with you wher ye go or ryde
J muste go thyder as J haue to do
Nay olde chorle be gody thou shalt not so
Seyde this othir hasardour anoy
Thou partest not so lightly be seynt Johy
Thou spakist right nolh of that treitour deth
That in this contre al our frendis sleth
Haue her my trouthe thou art his aspye
Tel where he is or thou shalt dye
Be gody andy by the holy sacrement
For shortly thou art one of his assent
To sle vs yonge folk thou fals theef
Nolh seris yf that it be to you leef
To synde deth turne vp this crokidy wey
For in that groue J hym salh last be my fey
Vnder a tre andy there he wol abyde
For your boost he wil no thingy hym hyde
Se ye that Oke right there ye shul hym synde
Gody saue you that boughte al may kynde

And you amende thus sayde this olde man
And euery of thyse Riotouris so they ran
Til they cam to the tre and there they sownd
Of flozeyns fyn golde I woynedy wunde
Wel nye an echte bussellis as hem thoughte
No lengir than aftir eth they soughte
But ech of theym so glady Was of that sighte
For that the flozeyns so fair Were and brighte
That doun they sat be the precyous hordy
The Worste of hem he spak the firste Worde
Gretheryn quod he take kepe What I saye
My Wit is greet though I bourde and playe
This tresour hath fortune vnto vs yeuyn
In mirthe and Jolite our lif to lyuyn
And lightly as it comyth so Wol We spende
Ey goddis precyous dignyte Who Wende
To day that We shulde haue so fair a grace
But mighte this goldy be caried fro this place
Hoom to my hous or ellis vnto youris
Than mighte We say that it Were al ouris
Than Were We in high felicite
But trewly by day it may not be
Men Wolde say that We Were theuys strongy
And for our owen tresour doy vs honge
This tresour muste be caried be nyght
As Wisely and as slily as it mighte
Wherfore I rede leet loke among vs alle
Draw cut let se Where that it Wil falle
He that hath the shortist cut With herte blithe

Shal renne to toun and that ful swithe
To bringe vs bred and wyne ful priuely
And two of vs shal kepe ful subtilly
This tresour wel and yf he wol not tarien
Whan it is nyght we wol this tresour carien
Be one assent where as vs list best
That on of hem broughte stralbe in his fist
And bad him draube & loke on whom it wold falle
And it fyl on the yongest of hem alle
And forth toward the toun he wente anone
And al so sone as he was goon
That on of hem spak thus vnto that othir
Thou wotist wel thou art my swoxn brothir
Thy profit wol I telle the right anon
Thou wost wel that our felow is goon
And here is gold and that ful gret plente
That shal be departid among vs three
But natheles yf I can shape it so
That it departid were among vs two
Had I not doon a frendis turn to the
That othir answerde y not how it might be
I wot wel the gold shal be ouris two
What shul we say What shul we do
Shal it be counsel sayde the firste shrewe
And I shal telle the in woxdis fewe
What we shul do and bringe it wel aboute
I graunte quod that othir out of doute
That be my trouthe I wol the not bewrey
Now quod he thou wotist wel we be tweye

And tweyne of vs shal strenger be than oy
Loke when he is set and than anon
A ryse as though thou woldist with hym pleye
And I shal ryue hym thorough the sidis tweye
Whilis thou strogelist with hym in game
And with thy daggar loke thou do the same
And than shal al this gold departid be
My dere frend betwix me and the
Than may we bothe our lustis fulfille
And pleye atte dyse right at our owen wille
And thus accordid be thyse shrewis tweye
To sle the thridde as ye haue herd me seye
This yongest whiche that went to the toun
Ful ofte in herte he rollid vp and doun
The beaute of thyse floreyns newe and bright
O lord quod he yf so were that I might
Al this tresour wynne to my self alone
Ther nys noman that liuyth vnder trone
Of godd that sholde lyue as mery as I
And atte laste the fend our enemy
Put in his herte that he sholde poyson beye
With whiche he mighte sle his felows tweye
For why the fend fond hym in suche liuynge
That he hadde leue hym in sorow to bringe
For this was vtterly his entent
To sle hem bothe and neuer to repent
And forth he goth no lenger wolde he tary
Into the toun vnto apotecary
And prayde hym that he wolde hym selle

Som poiſon that he mighte his ratte quelle
And eek therWith Was a polcat in his halle
That as he ſayde his capons hadde ſtalle
And ſayde he Wolde Wreke hem yf he mighte
Of Hermyn that deſtroyde hem he nyghte
The potecary anſWerde thou ſhalt haue
A thing as WiſSly god my ſoule ſaue
In al this Worlde ther is no creature
That etyn or drynkyn hath of this confecture
Not but the mountetince of a corn of Whete
That he ne ſhal anon his lif forlete
Ye ſterue he ſhal and that in laſſe Whyle
Or thou Wolt go paſſing half a myle
This poyſon is ſo ſtrong and ſo Violent
This curſid man hath in his hond it hent
And ſWithe in to the ſtrete vnto a man
As faſte as euer he mighte he ran
And borWid hym large botellis thre
And in to the tWeyne the poyſon purid he
The thridde he kepte clene for his drynke
For al nyght he ſhoop hym forto ſWynke
In caryinge of this gold out of this place
And Whan this Riotour With ſory grace
Hadde fillid ful his grete botellis thre
To his felowis ayeen repayrith he
What nedith it to ſermone of it more
For right as they hadde cast his deth afore
Right ſo they haue hym ſleyn right anone
And Whey this Was don they ſpak that one

Nolb leet bs ſitte & drynke & make bs mery
Andy aftirwardy we wil his body bery
Andy afterwardy it happidy hym p caas
To take the botel there the poyſon was
Andy drank andy yaf his felolb drynke alſo
For whiche anon they ſteruyn bothe two
But certis J ſuppoſe that Auicenne
Wroot neuer in no canoun ne in no ſene
More wonder ſorolbis of enpoyſonynge
Thus hadde thyſe wrechis two her endynge
Thus endidy ben thyſe homicides two
Andy the fals empoyſoner alſo
O curſidy ſynne ful of curſidnes
O traytours homicides o wickidnes
O glotony o luxury o haſardrye
Thou blaſphemar of crift with bilonye
Andy othes greete of bſage andy of pryde
Allas mankynde holb may it betyde
That to thy creatour whiche that the wrought
Andy with his precyous bloody the bought
Thou art ſo fals andy ſo bnkynde allas
Nolb gode men godi forzeue you your treſpas
Andy ware you from the ſynne of auarice
My holy pardon may you alle warifſhe
So that ye offir nobillis or ſterlingis
Oz ellis ſiluer ſponys brochis or ryngis
Golbith your hedy bnder thyſe holy bullis
Comyth bp ye wyuys offaith of your wollis
Your names J entre in my roll anon

Into the blisse of heuyn shal ye goon
I you assoylle be my high power
You that Wol offre as clene and as cleer
As ye were bore lo seris thus I preche
And Jhesu crist that is our soulis leche
So graunte you his pardon to receyue
For that is best I Wil you not deceyue
But seris o Word forgat I in my tale
I haue Pelikes and pardon in my male
As fair as ony man in Engelond
Whiche were me yeue be the Popis hond
Yf ony of you Wol of deuocioun
Offryn and haue myn absolucion
Comyth forth anon and knelith here a doun
And mekely receyueth your pardoun
And ye shul haue my pardon that is hende
Or ellis takith pardon as ye wende
Al nelwe and fressh at euery tounys ende
So that ye offir alwey nelwe and nelwe
Noblis or pens Whiche that been gode & trelwe
It is an honour to euerich that is here
That ye molwe haue a sufficiaunt pardonere
To assoylle you in contre as ye ryde
For auenturis Whiche that may betyde
For paueniure ther may falle oon or two
Doun of his hors and breke his necke a two
Loke Whiche a suretee it is to you alle
That I am in your felesship y falle
That may assoylle you bothe more and les

Whan that the ſoule ſchal from the body pas
I rede that our oſt here ſchal begynne
For he is moſt inuolupt in ſynne
Comyth forth ſir oſt and offrith right anon
And thou ſchalt kiſſe the relikes euerichon
Ye for a grote vnbokil anon thy purs
Nay nay quod he than haue I criſtis curs
Let be quod he it ſchal not be ſo theche
Thou woldiſt make me kis thyn olde breche
And ſwere it were a relik of a ſeynt
Though it were with thy fundement I peynt
But by that cros whiche that ſaint Eleyn fond
I wolde I hadde thy coltous in my hond
In ſtede of relikes othir of ſaintewary
Let auite hem of I wol helpe the hem to cary
They ſchul be chrynedy in an hoggis tord
This pardoner anſwerdy not o word
So wroth he was he wolde no word ſey
Nold quod our oſt I wol no lenger pley
With the ne with non other angry man
But right anon the worthy knyght began
When that he ſaw that al the pepyl lough
Nomore of this for it is right ynough
Sir pardoner be mery and glady of chere
And ye ſir oſt that be to me ſo dere
I pray you that ye kiſſe the pardonere
And pardoner I pray the draw the nere
And as we dide let vs laughe and pley
Anon they kiſſidy and ridey forth her wey

Ne wolde god neuer betwix vs tweyne
As in my gilt were othir werre or strif
Sire I wil be your humble trewe wyf
Haue here my trouthe til my herte brest
Thus hey they bothe in quyete and in rest
For o thyng sires sauely dar I say
That frendis eueriche other muste obeye
In loue and forbere eche other nedely
Yf they wil lyue in pes and holy companye
Wher maistrie is come the god of loue anon
Getith her wyngis and fare wel it is goon
Loue is a thing as ony thought fre
For women of kynde desiren liberte
And nat to be constreyned as a thral
And so doth men yf I the sothe telle shal
Loke who is most pacient in loue
He is at his auauntage al a boue
Pacience is an high vertu certeyn
For it vengnysshith as clerkis sayn
Thingis that rigour shal neuer atteyne
For euery worde men may not chide or pleyne
Lernyth to suffre or ellis so mot I goon
Ye shal it lerne whether ye wil or noon
For in this worlde certeyn no wight is
That he ne doth or saith sometyme amys
Ire sikenes or constillacioun
Wyne woo or chaungynge of complexioun
Causith ful ofte to do amys or spekyn
Oy euery wrong a man may not be wrekyn

Aftir the tyme muſte be temperance
To euery Wight that can of gouernaunce
And therfore hath this Wyſe Worthy knyght
To lyuyn in her ſuffraunce hir behight
And ſhe to hym ful Wisly gan ſWere
That neuer ſholde be defaute in here
Here men may ſe in humble Wyſe acorde
Thus hath ſhe take her ſeruaunt and her lordy
Seruaunt in loue and in mariage
Than Was he bothe in lordſhip and in ſeruage
Seruage nay but in lordſhip aboue
Sithe he hath bothe his lady and his loue
His lady certis and his Wyf alſo
The Whiche lalbe and loue acordith therto
And Whan he Was in his proſperite
Home With his Wyf he goth to his contre
Not fer fro Padmak his dWellyng Was
Where as he lyuyth in blis and in ſolas
Who coude telle but he that Weddid had be
The ioye the eſe and the proſperite
That is betWix an huſbond and his Wyf
A yeer or more leſtith this bliſful lyf
Til that this knyght of Whiche I ſpak thus
That of kyntrede Was clepid Arueragus
Shoop hym to goon x duelle a yeer or tWayne
In Engelond that clepid Was Britayne
To ſeke in armys Worſhip and honour
For al his luſt he ſette in ſuch labour
And duellid there tWo yeer the book ſaith thus

¶ Here endith the Pardoneris tale.
¶ And begynneth the Shipmannys tale.

A Marchaunt ſomtyme was at ſeynt denys
That riche was wherfore men held him wiſe
A wyf he hadde of excellent beaute
And compenable and reuelous was ſhe
Which thing causith more dispence
Than worth is al the fauour and reuerence
That men hem doon at festis and at daunsis
Suche salutacions and countenaunces
Passith as doth a shadwe up on a wal
But wo is hym that paien muste for al
The sely husbonde algate he must paye
He muste vs clothe and eek araye
For his owen worship ful richely
In whiche aray we daunsyn jolily
And yf that he naught paye parauenture
Orelis list not suche spences endure
But thynkith it is wastid and y lost
Than muste another paye for our cost
Or lene vs golde and that is parlous
This nobil Marchaunt held a nobil hous
For whiche he hadde so greet repeir
For his largences and for his wyf was feir
That folie is but herkenyth to my tale
Among alle thyse gestis grete and smale
Ther was a monk a fair man and a bold
I trowe that .xxv. winter he was old
That euer in one was drawyng to that place

This yonge monk that was so fair of face
Aqueyntid was so with the goody man
Sith that their first knowlage began
That in his hous as familier was he
As is possible ony frend to be
But for asmuche as this goody man
And eke this monk of whiche I began
Were bothe two bozn in on village
The monk of hym claymeth for osinage
And he ayen saith not onys nay
But was as glad ther of as foul of day
For to his herte it was a greet plesaunce
Thus been they knyt with etern allyance
And eche of hem gan other forto ensure
Of brotherhede whyle that her lyf may dure
Ffre was dane John and namly of dispence
As in that hous and ful of diligence
To don plesaunce and also gret costage
He nat forpat to yeue the leste page
Whan that he cam fum maner honest thing
For whiche they were as glad of his comyng
As foul is fayn whan sonne up risith
Nomore of this for it suffisith
But so be fyl this marchaunt on a day
Shop hym to make redy his aray
Toward the toun of Bruggis forto fare
To byen there apparaillyng of ware
For whiche he hade to Paris sent anon
A messanger and praid hath dan John

Nolle wol I stynte of this Arueragus
And spelke I wol of dorigene his wyf
That louyd her husbond as her lyf
For his absence wepith she and sikith
As doon thyse gode wyuys when hem likith
She morneth wakith waylith & pleynyth
Desire of his presence so her distreyneth
That al this wyde worlde she set at nought
Her frendis that knelw hir they thought
Here to comforte in al that euer they may
They prechyn here they techen here nyght and day
That causeles she sleth her self allas
And euery comfort possible in that caas
They do to here and al her besines
To auoyde her sorowe and her heuynes
Mey molde so longe graue in a stoon
Be processe as ye knolden euerichon
Til som figure ther ymme pryntid be
So longe haue they comforted here tyl she
Receyued hath by hope and by reson
The enprintinge of her consolacion
Thorwh whiche her sorowe began to aswage
She may not alwey dure in suche arage
And eke Arueragus in al this care
Hath sent her lettris hom of his welfare
And that he wol come hastely agayn
Or ellis hadde this sorowe her hert slayn
And thus they her sorowes for to slake
Prayde her on their knees for goddis sake

hevy

To come and Pome hyr in company
Whey to dryuen hyr derk fantesie
And finally she graumtid that requeste
For wel she salw it was for the beste
Nolw stood hyr castel faste by the se
And ofte with hyr frendis walkid she
Here forto disporte vpon the bank only
Where she many schippis and bargis sy
Saylyng hyr cours where hym list to go
But yet was that a parcel of hyr wo
For to hyr self ful ofte allas sayd she
Is ther no schip so many as I se
Wolde bryngе hoom my lord than were my hert
Al warisshid of his bittir peynys smert
Anothir tyme she wolde sitte and thinke
And caste hyr yen downward from the brynke
But whan she salw the grisly wokis blake
For verry feer wolde hyr herte quake
That on hyr feet she mighte not sustene
Than wolde she sit down vp on the grene
And pitously on the see with sighes olde
And saith right thus with herte colde
Eterne god that thorolw thy purueaunce
Ledist the worlde by certeyn gouernaunce
In ydil as men ye say ye no thinke make
But lord this grisly wokis blake
That sollmen rathir vnto soul confusion
Of werke than to ony maner creacion
Of suche parfit god wyse and stabil

And pitously on to the see beholde
And say right thus with sorowful sighen colde

Why haue ye Wrought this Work Vnresonabil
For by this Werke North south West ne est
Ther nys y fostrid may brid ne best
It doth no good to my Wit but annoieth
Se ye not lorde how mankynde it destroieth
Ay hundrid thousand bodyes of mankynde
Haue wekis slayn al though they be not in mynde
Syn mankynde is so fair a part of thy Werk
Thou it maad first lik to thyn owen merk
Than semyth it ye had do a gret charite
Towardy mankynde how mighte it than be
That ye suche menys make it to destroien
Suche menes do no good but annoien
I Woot Wel clerkis Wol say as hem list
Be argumentis that al is for the best
Though I ne can the causis Wel knowe
But that god that made the Wynd to blowe
As kepe my lord this is my conclusion
To clerkis lete I al disputacion
But Wolde god that alle thyse Rockis blake
Were sonkyn in to helle for his sake
Thyse rockis sle my herte for feer
Thus Wolde she say With many a pitous teer
Here frendis salbe that it Was no disport
To wonyn be the see but discomforte
And shapen forto pley somwhere ellis
They ledyn here by Reueris and by Wellis
And in other places dilectablis
They daunsyn and pleyn atte ches & atte tablis

So oy a day right oy the morow tide
Vnto a gardyn that was there beside
In whiche that they hady made her ordynaunce
Of vitayl andy of other purueaunce
They gooy andy pleyn hem al the longe day
Andy this was in the sixte morow of May
Whiche may hath peintidy with her soft showris
This gardyn ful of leuys andy of flouris
Andy craft of mannys hondy so coriously
Arraidy hath this gardyn trewly
That neuer was ther gardyn of suche pris
But yf it were the verry paradise
The odour of flouris andy the fresshe sighte
Wolde haue maady ony herte lighte
That euer was bory but yf gret siknes
Or to greet sorow held it in distres
So ful it was of beaute with plesaunce
Anon after dyner gonne they daunce
Andy songy also saue orygene alone
Whiche made alwey her compleynt & hir mone
For she ne salh hym in the daunce go
That was her husbondy andy her loue also
But natheles she must her tyme abyde
Andy with goody hope lete her sorowis slyde
Vp on this daunce amongy other meny
Daunsidy a squier befor orygene
That fresshest was andy Jolier of assay
As to my dome than is the monthe of May
He singith daunsith passingy ony other may

That is or was syn the worlde began
Therwith he was yf men sholde hym diserue
Oy of the beste saryngh men on lyue
Yongh strongh vertuous and wyse
And wel beloudy and holdyn in gret price
And shortly yf I the soth telle shall
Unbytyngh of this Dorigene at al
This lusty squier seruaunt to venus
Whiche that clepidy was Aurelius
He loudy her best of ony creature
Two yeer or more as was his auenture
But neuer durste he telle here his greuaunce
Withoute the cup drank he al his penaunce
He was despeyred no thingh durste he sey
Saue in his songis somdele wolde he wrey
This was in general his compleynynge
He saidy he loudy and beloudy no thingh
Of suche mater made he meny layis
Songis compleyntis rondels virayls
Holl that he durste not his sorwe telle
But languyngh as fier doth in helle
And dye he sayde he muste as didy Ekko
For Narcisus that durst not telle his wo
In other maner than ye here nowe say
Ne durste he not his wo to hir bewray
Saue pauenture at festes and daunsis
There yonge folk keppyn her obseruaunces
It may weel ben he lokidy in her face
In suche a wyse as men that apen grace

But no thing wiste she of his entent
Natheles it happid or they thens went
Be cause that he was her neyghebour
And was a man of worship and honour
And hadde knowen hym of tymes yore
They fallen in speche and so more and more
In to his purpos drew Aurilius
And when he saw his tyme he said thus
Madame quod he by god that this worlde made
So that I wiste I might your herte glade
I wolde that day that your Arueragus
Went ouer the se that I Aurelius
Had gone there I shold neuer come ayeen
For wel I woot my seruise is in veyn
My guerdon is but brestyng of myn herte
Madame reuhe on my peynys smerte
Here at your feet god wolde I were vegraue
For as wisly as god my soule saue
I ne haue as now no more leyser to seye
Haue mercy swete or ye wol do me deye
She gan to loke vp on this Aurelius
Is this your wil quod she and say ye thus
Neuer yet quod she wist I what ye ment
Ne neuer vnderstode I your entent
By that god that yaf me soule and lif
Ne shal I neuer be vntrewe wif
In word ne in werk as fer as I haue wyt
I wil be his to whom I am knyt
Take this for fynal answer as of me

But aftir thay in pley thus saidy she
Surely saidy she be high gody aboue
Yet Wol J graunte to be your loue
Syn J se you so pitously compleyne
Loke What day fro Englondy to britaigne
Ye remeue al the rockis stony be stony
That they ne lette ship ne boot to gony
J say Whay ye haue made this coste so clene
Of rockis that ther is no stony J seen
Thay Wol J loue you best of ony may
Haue here my trouthe in al that euer J can
For J Woot that it shal neuer betyde
Let suche folye out of your herte a slyde
What deynte sholde a may haue in his lyf
Forto go loue anothir mamys Wyf
Andy her hady Whey so that hym likith
Aurilius ful sore ofte he sikith
Is ther none other grace in you quod he
No by that lordy that made me
Wo Was Aurily Whay be this herde
Andy With a sorowful herte he thus answerde
Madame quod he this Were impossibil
Thay muste J dye in sodeyn deth horribil
Andy With that Wordy he turnedy hym anon
Tho cony her other frendes many ony
Andy in the aleyes romedyn Up an doun
Andy no thingy Wistyn of this conclusion
Andy sodenly begonmen reuel newe
Til the bright sonne lost his hewe

For the occident hadde reft the ſonne her light
This is as muche to ſay as it was nyght
And hoom they goon in ioye and ſolas
Saue only Wrecchid Aurilius allas
He to his hous is goon With ſorowful hert
He ſaith that he ne may from his deth aſtert
He ſaith that he feleth his herte cold
Unto heuyn his hondis he gan holde
And on his knees bare he ſet hym doun
And in Rauynge ſaid this oriſon
For lerry Wod out of his Wit he brayde
He nyſte What he ſpak but thus he ſayde
With pitous herte his pleynt hath begonne
And his prayer made firſt to the ſonne
He ſaid Appollo god and gouernour
Of euery planet herbe tre and flour
That yeuyſt after thy declinacion
To eche of hem his tyme and his ſeſon
And thyn herbrowh chaungith lowe and hye
Therfore my lord caſt ye your ye
On Wrecchid Aurily Whiche am but lorn
Lo lord my lady hath my deth ſWorn
Withouten ony gilt but thy lenignte
Up on my dedly herte haue ſom pyte
But Wel I Woot Phebus yf ye liſt
Ye may me helpe ſaue my lady beſt
Now kuchauf that I may you deuyſe
How that I may be holpen and in What Wyſe
Your bliſful ſuſtir Lucyna the ſhene

That of the see clif goddesse is andy quene
Though Neptunus haue deyte im the see
Yet Empresse aboue hym is she
Ye knoll Wel lordy/right as her desire
Is to be quyckenedy andy lightnydy of your fyre
For Which she folowith you ful besily
Right so the see desirith naturelly
To folow her andy she that is goddes
Bothe im the see andy ryuers more andy les
Wherfore lordy Phebus this is my requeste
Do this mirakil or do myn herte breste
That thou next at this opposicion
With ymme Whiche signe shal be the lioun
As praieth her so greet a floody to bringe
That fyue fadom at the leest it ouer springe
The hiest wok that is im al Bretayne
Andy leet this flood endure yeris tweyne
Than certis to my lady may I sey
Holdith your hest the wokkis be alwey
Lordy Phebus this mirakil do for me
Pray here that she go no faster oours than ye
I say thus pray your sustir that she go
No fastir oours than ye im yeris two
Than shal she be at euene ful alway
Andy springe flody laste bothe nyght andy day
Andy but ye Loucheſauf im suche manere
To graunte me my souereyn lady dere
Pray her to synke euery wok a doun
Into helle her owen derk mansioun

Vnder the grounde there Pluto duellith yn
Or neuer shal I my lady wyn
Thy tempil in delphose wol I seke
Lordy Phebus se the teris on my cheke
And of my payne haue som compassion
And with that wordy in swommynge he fil adoun
And longe tyme he lay in a traunce
His brothir whiche knew his penaunce
Vp caught hym and to bedde hath hym brought
Dispeirydy in this turment & in this thought
Lete I this wofful creature ly
Chese he whether he wol lyue or dy
Arueragus with hele and honour
As he that was of chiualrye the flour
Is comyn hoom and othir worthy men
A blisful herte hath now wedded
That hast thy blisful husbondy in thyn armys
The fresh knyght the worthy may of armys
That louith the as his owen hertis lyf
No thingy list he to be ymaginatyf
If ony wight hadde spoke whylis he was oute
To her of loue ther of hadde he no doute
He not entendith to suche matere
But daunsith iustith and makith goody cheer
And thus in ioye and blis I lete hem duelle
And of the sik Aurilius wol I telle
In langour and m turment furious
Two yeer and moze lay this Aurilius
Or ony foot he mighte on erthe goon

Comfort in this tyme hadde he noon
Saue his brothir Whiche Was a clerk
He knew al this Woo andy al this Werk
For to noon other creature certeyn
Of this mater he durste no Word sayn
Vnder his brest he bare it more secree
Than euer didy Phamphilus or Galathe
His brest Was hool Without forto seen
But in his hert ay Was the arow keen
Andy Weel I knowe of Surgeture
In surgerye ful perlous is the cure
But men mighte touche the arow or com therby
His brother Wepith andy Waylith priuely
Tyl atte laste hym fyl in remembraunce
That Whylis he Was at Orliaunce in Fraunce
As yonge clerkis that ben likorous
To redyn artis that ben curious
Sekyn in euery halke andy euery herne
Particuler science forto lerne
He hym remembrid that vp on a day
In orliaunce in a book that he say
Of magik naturel With his felow
That Was that tyme a bacheler of lawe
Al Were he there to lerne another craft
Hady priuely vp on his deske laft
Suche a book as spak moche of operacions
Andy of many dyuers coniuracions
That longen to the mone andy suche foly
As in our dayes is not Worth a flye

For holy chirche ſaith in our beleue
Ne ſuffrith not illuſion vs to greue
And when this book was in remembraunce
Anon for ioye his herte gan to daunce
And to hym ſelf he ſayde priuely
My brothir Warriſſhed ſhal be haſtely
For I am ſiker ther be ſciences
Be whiche men make diuers apparences
Whiche alle thyſe ſubtil tregetouris pley
For ofte at feſtis haue I herd ſeye
That tregetouris withynne an halle large
Haue made come in watir in a barge
And in the halle rollen vp and doun
Som tyme hath ſemed come a greet liown
And ſom tyme flouris ſpryngyngh in a mede
Som tyme wyne and grapis whyte and rede
Som tyme a Caſtel of lyme and ſtone
And when he liſith it voidith anon
Thus ſemyth it to many a mannys ſight
Now than conclude I thus yf I myghte
At ordiaunce ſom old felow fynde
That hadde the monys manſions in mynde
Or othir magik naturel aboue
He ſholde wel make my brother haue his loue
For whiche apparence a clerk may make
To mannys ſight that al the rockis blake
Of Britayne were voydid euerichoon
And ſhippis be the brynkis comyn and goon
And in ſuche ſourme endure a woke or two

Thay Were my brothir Warisshid of his Wo
Thay muste she nedis holde her behest
Or ellis he shal shame her at the leste
What sholde I make a lenger tale of this
Unto his brotheris bedy I come he is
And suche comfort he yaf hym forto goon
To Orliaunce that he up stert anoon
And on his Wey thay onWardy is he fare
In hope forto be lissid of his care
Whey they Were come almost to that cite
But yf it Were a two forlongy or thre
A yongy clerk Romynge hym self they mette
Whiche that in latyn thriftely hem gretie
And aftir he sayde a Wonder thingy
I knowe quod he the cause of your comynge
And er they further ony foot Wente
He tolde hem al What Was here entent
This britoun clerk hym axidy of felaWys
The Whiche he hady knowen in oldy dayes
And he answeridy hem that they ady Were
For Whiche he Wepte ful many a tere
Doun of his hors Aurilius light anon
And With this magicien forth he gan goon
Hoom to his hous andy made hym Wel at ese
Hym lackidy no vitayl that hem might plese
So Wel araidy hous as there Was oon
Aurilius in his lyf saW neuer noon
He shewde hym or he Wente to Sopere
Forestis Parkis ful of Wylde dere

There ſalb he hertis With her hornys hye
The grettiſt that Were euer ſeye With ye
He ſalb of hem an hundrid ſleyn With houndis
And ſome of arowes blede and bitter Woundis
He ſalb Where Woundid Were thyſe Wilde deer
The fauons vp on a fair ꝑuer
That With her beckis gan herons ſleyn
To ſy he knyghtis iuſtynge in a pleyn
And aftir this he did hym ſuche pleſaunce
That he hym ſhelde his lady in a daunce
In Whiche hym ſelf daunſed as hym thoughte
And When this maiſter ꝑ this magik Wrought
Salb it Was tyme he clappid his hondis to
And farewel our reuel Was al y do
He remeued nauer out of his hous
Whyle they ſalb aſt this meruayllous
But in his ſtody there as his bokis be
They ſittyn ſtille While they ſalb this they thre
To hym this maiſtir callid his ſquier
And ſayde hym thus is redy our ſoper
Almoſt an hour it is I vndertake
Syn I you bad our ſoper for to make
When that thyſe Worthy men Wente With me
In to my ſtody there as my bokis be
Sire quod the ſquier When it likith yoW
It is al redy though ye Wil right noW
So We ſope quod he it is for the beſte
Thyſe armorous folk ſumtyme moſte haue reſte
And aftir ſoper fyl they in trete

What sum̃e sholde the maistris guerdon be
To remeue alle the rockis in Britaigne
And eek from gerounde to the mouth of sayne
He made hym straunge he woor so god hym saue
Lesse than a thousandy pound he wolde not haue
Me gladly for that sum̃e he nolde not goon
Aurilius with blisful herte anon
Saith thus fy on a thousandy pound
The wyde worlde which men say is round
I wolde it yeue yf I were lordy of it
This bargayn is ful dryue and ful knyt
Ye shul be paidy trewly be my trouthe
But lokith nowh for noon negligence ne slouthe
Ye tarye vs here no lenger than to morowh
Nay quod the clerk haue here my feith to borowh
To bedde he goth Aurilius whan hym lest
And wel nygh al that nyght he hadde rest
What for his bargayn and for his hope of blisse
His wofful herte of penaunce hadde a lisse
Vp on the morowh whan it was day
To Britayne took they the right way
Aurilius and this Magicien hym beside
And be descendedy there they wol abyde
And this was as the book doth remembre
The colday frosty seson of decembre
Phebus hewe wexidy was lik latoun
That a fore in his hoot declinacioun
Shone as the burnyd goldy with stremys bright
But thenne in Capricorne adoun he light

Thare as he ſhone ful paal J dar Wel ſayn
The bittir froſtis With the ſlit of Payn
Deſtroidy hath the grene in euery yerdy
Jamis ſit by the fyre With dobbyl herde
Andy drynketh of his bugil hozn the Wyne
Andy aftir this ale bothe goody andy fyn
Andy nolbel cryeth euery luſty man
Aurilius doth al that he can
To Wayte a tyme of his concluſion
This is to ſay to make illuſion
Be ſuche apparent Jogelrye
J can no termys of aſtrologie
They ſhulde that euery Wight ſholde Wene a ſay
That of Britayne the Rockis Were aWay
Or ellis they Were ſonkyn Vnder the grounde
So at the laſte he hath his tyme y founde
To make his Jape andy his Wrecchidnes
Of ſuche a ſuperſticion of curſidnes
His tablis tolentanes forth he brought
Ful Weel correctidy it lackidy nought
Neythir his colet ne his eppans yeris
Ne his rotis ne his othir geris
Andy by his centris andy his argumentis
Andy his proporcionel contentis
For his equacions in euery thingy
Andy by his eygth ſpeere in his Workyngy
He knelb ful Weel holb fer anath Was ſolbe
Fro the bedy of that fixe aries bolbe
That in the .iij. ſpere conſideridy is

Retournet3 to your fadris hous quod he
No may may alwey haue prosperyte
With euyn herte I rede you to endure
The stwok of fortune or of auenture
And che agayn answerde in pacience
My lusty lordy quod che I woot z wiste alwey
Holo that betwixt your magnificence
And my pouerte no wight can ne may
Make ony comparison it is no nay
I ne helde me neuer digne in no manere
To be your wyf neyther your chamberere
And in this hous there ye me lady made
The high gody take I for witnes
And also wisly be my soule glade
I neuyr helde me lady ne maistres
But humble seruaunt to your worthynes
And euer shal whyle my lif may endure
Abouen euery wordly creature
That ye haue so longe of your benignite
Holde me in high nobles and honourey
There as I was not worthy forto be
That thanke I gody to whom I prey
Foryelde it you ther is no more to sey
Unto my fader gladly wol I wende
And with hym duelle to my liuys ende
There as I was forstridy of a childy ful smal
Tyl I be dedy my lif there wol I lede
A widow cleeny in body herte and al
For seth I yaf to you my maydenhede

I am your trewe wyf it is no drede
God schilde suche a lordis wyf to take
Another husbond or ony man to make
And of your newe wyf god of his grace
So sende you weel and prosperite
For I wol gladly yelde her my place
In whiche I was blessful wont to be
For sith it liketh you my lordy quod she
That som tyme were al my hertis reste
That y shal goon I wol go whan ye leste
But there as ye me profre such dolbere
As I first brought it is wel in my mynde
It were my wrechidy clothis no thingy feir
The whiche to me nolde were hardy to fynde
O goode godys holde gentil and holde kynde
Ye semyd by your speche and your visage
The day that maad was our mariage
But soth is saidy alwey I fynde it trewe
For in effect ypreuyd it is on me
Loue is not olde as whan it is newe
But certis lordy for non aduersite
To dye in this caas it shal not be
That euer in wordy or werk I shal repent
That I you yeue my herte in hool entent
My lordy ye woot that in my fadres place
Ye didy me stripe out of my poure wede
And richely ye me cladi of your grace
To you broughte y nought ellis out of drede
But feith nakidnes andy my maydenhede

*.

go to the paper marked

*

Ful ſubtally he calkedy al this
Whan he hadde his firſte manſion
He knew the remenaunt by proporcion
Andy knew the riſinge of the mone weke
Andy in whos face andy ſigne euerideke
Andy knew wel the monys manſion
Attendant vnto his operacion
Andy he knew alſo wel his other obſeruaunces
For ſuche illuſions andy ſuche myſchaunces
As hethen folk vſeden in tho dayes
For ſothe no lenger makith he delayes
But thorwh his magik a woke or tweye
It ſemydy that al the rockis were aweye
Aurilius yet whiche that deſpeyridy is
Wher he ſhal haue her loue or fare amys
Andy waytith nyght andy day oy this mirakil
Andy when he knew ther was noy obſtakil
That letidy were the rockis echoy
Doun to his maiſtris feet he fyl anoy
Andy ſayde J woful wrecched Aurilius
Thanke you lordy andy my lady lemus
That me haue holpe fro my cares colde
Andy to the tempil his wey hath he holde
Where as he knew he ſholde his lady ſe
Andy when he ſaw his tyme anoy right he
With dredful herte andy humbil chere
Salewidy hath his ſouereyn lady dere
My right lady quod this woful may
Whom y moſt drede andy loue as J beſt may

And lothest were in al this worlde displese
Were it for you I haue suche disese
That I moot dye here at your foot anon
Nought wolde I telle you me is wo begon
But certis or I muste dye or pleyne
Ye sle me giltles for verry peyne
But of my deth ye haue no routhe
Thinkith nowe vp on your trouthe
And repente you for that gody aboue
Or ye me sle by cause that I you loue
For Madame wel ye woot what ye haue hight
Not that I chalange ony thing of right
Of you my souereyn lady but of your grace
But in the gardyn yonder in suche a place
Ye witen right weel what ye beheten me
And in myn hond there your trouthe plight ye
To loue me best/ god woot ye sayde so
Al be it that vnworthy I be therto
Madame I speke for the honour of you
More than forto saue my hertis lif right nowe
I haue ydo as ye comaunded me
And yf ye vouchesauf ye mowe se
Sith as you list haue your hest in mynde
For quyck or ded trewe shul ye me fynde
In you lith to do me lyue or deye
But wel I woot the werkis been a weye
He taketh his leue and she a stonedy stoond
In al her face nas o drope of blood
She wende neuer to come in suche a trappe

And here ayeen my clothing I restore
And eke my Bedding ryng for euermore
The remenaunt of your iewellis redy they be
With yme your chamber I dar it safly seyn
Nakid out of my fadres hous quod she
I cam and nakid muste I turne ayeen
Al your plesaunce folow Wolde I seyn
But yet I hope it be not your entent
That I smokles out of your paleis Went
Ye oude not do so dishoneste a thyng
That ilke Wombe in Whiche your childreyn lay
Sholde before the peppl in my Walkyng
Be seye al bare Wherfore I you pray
Let me not lik a Worm go by the Wey
Remembre you myn olden lordy so dere
I Was your Wyf thogh I vnWorthy Were
Wherfore in guerdon of my maydenhede
Whiche that I broughte and not ayen y here
As Vouchesauf as yeue me to my mede
But suche a smok as I Was Wont to Were
That I therWith may Wrye the Wombe of here
That Was your Wyf and here I take my leue
Of you myn olden lordy leest that I you greue
The smok quod he that thou hast vp on thy bak
Let it be stylle and here it forth With the
But Wel vnmetle that Wordy he spak
But Wente his Wey for routhe and pyte
Be for the folk her self stripedy hath she
And in her smok With foot and heer al bare

Tolwardy her fadris hous is she fare
The folk her folollyn Wepyngh in her Wey
Andy foztune euer they curſidy as they goon
But she fro Wepyngh kepte her yey dreye
Ne in this tyme Wordy spak she noon
Her fadir that thyſe tidinges herde anon
Curſidy the day andy the tyme that nature
Shoop hym to be a lyuys creature
For oute of doute this olde poure may
Was euer ſuſpect of her mariage
For euer he demydy ſith it be gay
That Whan the lordy hady fulfildy his orage
He Wolde thinke it Were a diſparage
To his aſtat ſo lolle to light
Andy loydey her as ſone as euer he might
Ayens his doughter haſtely goth he
For he by noyſe of folk knelle her compynge
Andy With her olde cote as it mighte be
He keueridy her ful ſozouſully Wepyngh
But on her body mighte he it not bzynge
For rude Was the cloth andy she moze of age
Be daies fele than Was her mariage
Than With her fader for a certeyn ſpaas
Duellidy this flour of Wifly patience
That neuer by her Wordy ne by her face
Beforn the folk ne in her abſence
Ne shelde she that her Was doy offence
Ne of hir high aſtat no remembzaunce
Ne hady she as by ony maner contenaunce

No Wonder Was for ín her greete aſtat
Her goſt Was euer ín pleyn humylite
No tender mouth ne herte delicaat
No pompe ne ſemblaunce of rialte
But ful of paciént benígnite
Diſcreet andy prideles andy ay honourabil
Andy ay to her huſbondy meke andy ſtabil
Mey ſpeke of Job andy moſt for his humbles
As clerkis Whan hem liſt can Wel endite
Namely of mey but ín ſothfaſtnes
Though clerkis preyſe Womey but alite
Ther can noman ín humbles hem aquyte
As Woman can ne can be half ſo trelbe
As Womey bey but it be falle of nelbe

¶ Quinta pars.

TRo Boleyne this erle of Pauye cam
Of Whiche the fame ſprongy both more & leſſe
Andy ín the peplis eris al andy ſom
Was toldy that he a nelbe Markeſſe
With hym broughte ín ſuche ponipe andy riches
That neuer Was ſeye With mamys ye
So ryal a ſight ín al Weſtlumbardye
The Markis Whiche that chope & knelb al this
Or that this erle Was come ſente his meſſage
For that ſely poure creature the Marqueſſe
Andy ſhe With humble herte andy glady biſage
Not With no ſWellyngy thought ín her corage
Cam at his heſte andy on her knees her ſet
Andy reuerently andy Wiſly ſhe hym gret

Griſilde quod he my Wil is ful entierly
This mayden that Weddid ſhal be to me
Receyued be to moroŵ al ſo rialy
As it is poſſible in my hous to be
And eke that euery Wight in his degre
Haue his eſtaat in ſittinge and in ſeruiſe
And hye pleſaunce as ye can beſt deuyſe
I haue no Woman ſufficiaunt certeyn
The chambris forto arraye in ordenaunce
After my liſt and therfore Wolde I fayne
That thyn Were al ſuche maner of gouernaunce
Thou knoŵeſt eek of old al my pleſaunce
Though thyn aray be badde and euyl be ſeye
Do thy deuoyr yet atte the leſte Wey
Not only lord that I am glad quod ſhe
To do your luſt but I deſire alſo
You firſt to pleaſe and ſerue in my degre
Withoute fayntynge and ſhal euer mo
Ne for no Weel ne for no maner of Wo
Ne ſhal ye goſt With in my herte ſtynte
To loue you beſt With al my treŵ entente
And With that Word ſhe gan the hous to dighte
And tablis forto ſette and beddis forto make
And peyned here to do al that ſhe mighte
Prayynge the chamberers for goddis ſake
To haſte hem and faſte ſWepe and ſhake
And ſhe the moſte ſeruiſabil of alle
Hath euery chambir araid and eke his halle
Aboute the Vndrey gan this erle to lighte

That With him brought thise nobil children tWey
For Whiche the peppl ran to se that sight
Of here aray mightily they Were Reseye
And than among hem alle they seye
That Walter Was no fool though that hym list
To chaunge his Wyf for it Was for the best
For she is fairer as they demyn alle
Than is Grisilde and more tendir of age
And fairer fruyt betWen hem shal falle
And more plesaunce for her high lynage
Her brothir eke so fair of Visage
That hem to se the peppl hath caught plesaunce
Comendynge noW the Markis gouernaunce
O sturdy peppl euer Vnsad and Vntrewe
Ay Vndiscreet and chaungynge as a Vane
Here may ye se the pepls holW newe
Ay ful of clappinge dere ynoW a Jane
And changeable be right as the mane
Your Wome is fals your constaunce euyl preuyth
A ful gret fool is he that on you leuith
Thus sayden sad folk m that cite
When that the peppl gadrid Vp and doWn
For they Were glad right for the newelte
To haue a newe lady of her toWn
Nomore of this noW make J mencion
But to Grisilde ageyn J Wil me dres
And telle here constaunce and her Resines
Ful Resi Was Grisilde in euery thing
That to the feste Was tho appertinent

Right nought Was ſhe abaſſhid of her clothinge
Though it Were rude andy ſomdele eke to vent
But With clady chere to the yate is ſhe Went
With other folk to grete the Markeſes
Andy aftir doth forth her beſynes
With right glady chere ſhe his geſtis receyuedy
Andy ſo commyngly eche in his degre
That no defaute noman perceyuydy
But ay they Wondrid What ſhe might be
That in ſo poure aray Was forto ſe
Andy coude ſuche honoure andy reuerence
Andy Worthyly they preyſey her prudence
In al this mene Whyle ſhe ne ſtynt
This mayde andy eek hir brother to comende
With al her herte in ful benigne entent
So Weſſ that noman coude her preſingy amende
But atte laſte Whan that lordis Wende
To ſittyn doun to mete he gan to calle
Griſilde as ſhe Was beſy in the halle
Griſilde quod he as it Were in his pley
How likith the my Wyf andy her beaute
Right Weſſ my lordy quod ſhe for in goody fey
A fairer ſaW I neuer than is ſhe
I prey to godi yeue her goody proſperyte
Andy ſo hope I he Wil to you ſende
Plesaunce ynoW Unto your liues ende
O thingy y beſeche you andy Warne alſo
That ye not prik With no turmentyng
This tendir mayde as ye haue do mo

For ſhe is foſtrid̄ in her noriſſhinge
More tenderly and̄ to my ſuppoſinge
She coude not aduerſite Wel endure
As coude a poure foſtrid̄ creature
And̄ Whan this Walter ſalb her paciēce
Her glad̄ chere and̄ no malice at al
And̄ he ſo ofte hadde do to her offence
And̄ ſhe ay conſtant and̄ ſad̄ as a Wal
Contynuynge euer here Jnocence ouer al
This ſturdy Markis gan his herte dreſſe
To relle vp on her Wifly ſtedfaſtnes
This is ynoll Griſilde myn quod he
Be noll nomore agaſt ne euyl apayd̄
J haue thy feith and̄ thy benignite
As Wel as euer Woman Was a laid̄
In gret aſtat or pouerly arraid̄
Noll knolle J dere Wyf thy ſtedfaſtnes
And̄ here in armys took and̄ gan her kyſſe
And̄ ſhe for Wonder took of hym no kepe
She herde not What thing he to her ſayde
She farid̄ as ſhe hadde ſtert out of her ſlepe
Til ſhe out of hir maſidnes abreyde
Griſilde quod he be god̄ that for vs deyde
Tholl art my Wyf non other J haue
Ne neuer J hadde as god̄ my ſoule ſaue
This is thy doughter Whiche thou haſt ſuppoſid̄
To be my Wyf that othir feithfully
Shal be myn heir as J haue diſpoſid̄
Thou bare hym in thy body ful trelly

At boleyne haue I kept hem priuely
Take hem ayeen for now maist thou nat sey
That thou hast lory none of thy childryn tWey
And folk that othir Wyse haue sayd by me
I Warne hem Wel that I haue doy this dede
For no malice ne for no cruelte
But forto assay in the thy Womanhede
And nat to sle my childryn gody forthede
But forto kepe hem priuely and stille
Til I thy purpos knew and al thy Wylle
Whey she this herde in swommyng doWy she fallith
For pitous ioye and aftir her swommyng
She to her bothe here yonge childryn callith
And in her armys ful petously Weppynge
Enbraced hem and tenderly kissinge
Ful lik amodir With salt teris
She badith bothe her Visage and her eris
O Whiche a pitous thing it Was to se
Her swommynge and her pitous Vois to here
Graunt mercy lorde/ gody thanke it you qd she
That ye haue saued me my childryn dere
Now recke I neuyr to be ded euyn here
Sith y stonde in your loue and in your grace
No doute of deth ne Whay my spirit pace
O tender o dere o yonge childryn myn
Your Woful moder Wende ful stedfastly
That cruel hounds or som foul Venym
Hadde etyn you but gody of his mercy
And your kemigne fader so tenderly

Hath done you kepe and̄ in that ſame ſtounde
Al ſodenly ſhe ſwapt down to grounde
And̄ in her ſwoune ſo ſadly holdith ſhe
Her childryn two whan ſhe gan hem brace
That with greet ſleyghte and̄ greet difficulte
The childryn from here arm gon they race
O many a tere of many a pitous face
Doun ran of hem that ſtodyn there beſide
Ymethe aboute here mighte they abyde
Walter her gladith and̄ her ſowe ſlakith
She riſith vp and̄ baſſhith from her traunce
And̄ euery wight her ioye and̄ feſte makith
Til ſhe hath caught ayeen her contenaunce
Walter doth her ſo feithful pleſaunce
That it was deynte to ſe the chere
Betwene hem two ſyn they be met in fere
Thyſe ladyes whan they her tyme ſey
Haue takyn here and̄ in to chambir anon
And̄ ſtripen here out of her rude aray
And̄ in a cloth of gold̄ that bright ſhon
With a croune of many a riche ſtoon
Vp on her hed̄ in to the halle they brought
And̄ there ſhe was honoured̄ as ſhe ought
Thus hath this pitous day a blisful ende
For euery man and̄ woman doth his might
This day in mirthe and̄ reuel to ſpende
Til on the welkyn ſhon the ſterrys light
For more ſolempnyte in euery mannys ſight
This feſte was and̄ of gretter oſtage

Than was the reuel of hir mariage
Ful many a yeer in high prosperite
Lyuen thyse two in concorde and in reste
And richely his doughter maried he
Unto a lord on of the worthiest
Of al Itail and than in pees and reste
His wyuys fader in his court he kepith
Til the soule out of the body crepith
His sone succedith in his heritage
In reste and pees aftir his fadris day
And fortunat was eke in mariage
Al put he nat his wyf in gret assaye
This worlde is not so strong it is no nay
As it hath been in olde tymes yore
And herkith what this auctor saith therfore
This story is said nat for that wyuys sholde
Folow Grisilde as in high humylyte
For it were importabil though they wolde
But for that euery wight in his degre
Sholde be constant in al aduersite
As was Grisilde wherfore Petrark writith
This story whiche with high stile enditith
For sith a woman was so patient
Unto a mortal man wel more we oughte
Receyuen al in good that god vs sent
For gret skilis I preue that he wrought
But he ne temptid noman that he bought
As saith saint Jame yf ye his pistil rede
He preuyth folk but a day it is no drede

And ſuffrith vs as for our exercíſe
With ſharpe ſcorgis and aduerſite
Ful ofte to be bete in ſondry wyſe
Nat forto knowe our wil but certis he
Er we were wery knelt al our freelte
And for our beſte is al his gouernaunce
Lete vs lyue thay in vertuous ſuffraunce
But o word harkenyth lordingis or I go
It were ful hard to fynde now a days
Griſildis in al a contre oy or two
For yf they were put to ſuche aſſayes
The gold of hem hath ſo badde a layes
With bras for though it be fair at ye
It wolde rathir breſte oy two thay plye
For whiche here for the wyuys loue of Bathe
Whoos lyf and ſecte mighty god mayntene
In high maiſtrie or ellis were it ſcathe
I wol with lusty herte fresh and grene
Sey you a song to glade you I wene
And leet vs ſtynte of erneſt matere
Herkeneth my song that ſaith in this manere
Griſilde is ded and eek her pacience
And bothe at onys buried in Italie
For whiche I crye in open audience
No wedded man ſo hardy be to aſſaile
His wyuys pacience in truſt to fynde
Griſildis for certeyn he ſhal faile
O noble wyuys ful of prudence
Leet noon humylite your tungis naile

Me lete no clerk haue cause or diligence
To wryte of you a story of suche meruayl
As of Grisilde pacient and kynde
Lest cheuache you walow in entrail
Folowith ecco that holdith no silence
But euyr answeringe atte countirtayl
Be nat a daffid for your Jnocence
But sharply take on you the gouernayl
Enpryntith wel that lesson in your mynde
For comyn profit seith it may auayll
Ye archewyuys stondith at defence
Syn ye be stronge as is a gret Camayll
Me suffre not that men do you offence
But sklender wyuys as febil in batayll
Geth egre as a tigre is/fer in ynde
Ay clappinge as a mylle J you counsayl
Me dredith hem not do hem no reuerence
For though thy husbond armed be in mayl
Thy wordis of thy crabbed eloquence
Shal perse his brest and eke his auentayl
In Jelousie J rede eke that thou hym bynde
And thou shalt make hym cowche as a quayl
Yf thou be fair there folk been in presence
Shew thou thy visage and thyn apparayll
Yf thou be foul be fre of thy despence
To gete the frendis ay do thy trauayll
Be ay of chere as light as leef on lynde
And leet hym care wepe wrynge and wayl

Verba hospitis.

Chychenache

THis worthy clerk whan endid was his tale
Our oste sayde and swoor he cockis bonys
Me were leuer than a barel of ale
My wyf hadde herd this legende onys
This is a gentil tale for the nonys
As to my purpos wyste ye my wil
But thing that wil not be let it be stylle
¶ Here endith the tale of the clerk of Oxenforde
¶ And begynneth the Frankeleynes prologh.
THese olde gentil britons in her dayes
Of diuers auctours maden her layes
Rymed first in her owen briton tunge
Suche layes with her instrumentis they sunge
Or ellis redden hem for her plesaunce
And on of hem haue I in remembraunce
Whiche I shal say with as good wil as I can
But sires be cause I am a borel man
At my begynnynge first I you beseche
Haue me excusid of my rude speche
I lernyd neuer rethorik in certayn
Thing that I speke muste be bare and playn
I slepte neuer in the mount of pnaso
Ne lerned Marcus Tullius nr Cithero
Colowris knowe I noon withouten drede
But suche colouris as growen in the mede
Or ellis suche as men dien or peynte
Colours of rethorik be to me queynte
My spirit felith in no suche matere
But and ye list my tale shul ye here

Here endith the Frankeleyns prologh
And here begynneth his tale.

IN armorik that callid is Britayne
Ther was a knight that loued and dede his payne
To serue ladyes in his beste wyse
And many a labour and meny a gret empryse
He for his lady wrought or she was wonne
For she was on the fairest vnder sonne
And eke therto comyn of high kynrede
That wel vnnethe durste the knyght for drede
Telle here his wo or peyne or distres
But atte last she for his worthynes
And namely for his meke obeyssaunce
Hath suche appetit caught of his penaunce
That she priuely fil of his accorde
To take hym for hir husbonde and for hir lorde
Of suche lordship as men haue ouyr hir wyues
And forto lede in the more blisse her lyues
Of his fre wil he swoor her as he was a knyght
That neuer in al his lyf by day ne by nyght
Ne sholde of hym take no maistrie
Ageyns her wil ne kithe her Jelousie
But her obeye and folowe her wil in al
As ony louer to his lady shal
Saue the name of souereynte
That wolde he haue for shame of his degre
She thanketh hym of his humblenesse
She sayde sire of your gentilnesse
Ye profer me to haue so large a reyne

That he sholde come to saint denys and pley
With hym and his wyf a day or tweye
Er he to Briggis wente in alle wyse
This nobil monk the whiche I you deuyse
Hath of his abbot as hym list licence
Be cause he was a man of high prudence
And eke an Officer out forto ryde
To se her graungis and her bernys wyde
And to saint Denys comyth hym anone
Who was so welcom as my lordy dan John
Our dere cosyn ful of curtesie
With hym he broughte a Jub of malueisie
And eke another ful of fyn wernage
And vitayl as was his vsage
And thus I lete hem drynke ete and pleye
This Marchaunt and this monk a day or tweye
The thridde day the Marchaunt vp risith
And on his nedis sadly hym auisith
And vp to his countirhous goth he
To reken with hym self wel may he
Of that yeer holl that it with hym stoody
And holl that he dispendid hady his goody
And yf encreesid he hadde or none
His bokis and his baggis many one
He leyeth bifore hym on his countyng bord
Ful riche was his tresour and his hord
For whiche ful fast his countour he shette
And eke he wolde that noman sholde hym lette
Of his accountynge for the mene tyme

And thus he sat til it was passid prime
Dan John was risen in the morow also
And in the gardyn walkid to and fro
And sayde his thingis ful coriously
This goody wyf cam walking priuely
Into the gardyn there as he walkid softe
And hym salewid as she hath doon ofte
A mayde childe cam in her company
Whiche as she list she may gouerne and gye
For yet vnder the yerde was the mayde
O dere cosyn myn dan John she sayde
What eyleth you so rathe forto ryse
Nece quod he it oughte ynough suffise
Fyue houris to slepe on a nyght
But it were for any old pallid wight
As been thyse olde wedded men that lien & dare
As in a fourme sittith a wery hare
Were al for straught wit houndis grete & smale
But dere nece why loke ye so pale
I trow certis that our goody man
Hath you labourid sith the nyght began
That you were nede to restyn hastely
And with that word he lough ful merily
And with his owen thought wept al reedy
This faire wyf gan shake her heed
And sayde thus ye god woot quod she
Nay cosyn it stondith not so with me
For by that god that yaf me soule and lyf
In al the reme of fraunce is ther no wyf

That lasse lust hath to that sory play
For y may synge allas and wel a wey
That I was borñ but to no wyght quod she
Dar I not telle how it stondith with me
Wherfore I thinke out of this lond to wende
Or ellis of my self to make an ende
So ful am I of drede and of care
This monk began vp on this wyf to stare
And sayde allas myn nece god forbede
Ye for ony sorow or for ony drede
For do your self/but tel me your greef
Parauenture I may m your myschief
Counsel or helpe and therfor tellith me
Al your amoye/for it shal secret be
For on my port hose here I make myn oth
That neuer in my lif for leef ne loth
Ne shal I of no counsel you bewreye
The same quod she to you y seye
Be god and be this portose I you swere
Though men wol me al to peces tere
Ne shal I neuer forto go to helle
Bewrey o word of thing that ye me telle
Nat for no cosynage/ne alliaunce
But verily for loue/and affiaunce
Thus been they swore and there vp on I kist
And eche talkith to other what them list
Cosyn quod she yf I hadde space
As I haue none and namly in this place
Than wolde I telle a legende of my lif

What I haue ſuffrid ſyn I was wyf
With my huſbonde al be he your coſyn
Nay qd this monk by god & by ſaint Martyn
He is nomore Coſyn to me
Than is the leef that hangith on the tre
I clepe hym ſo by ſeynt denys of Fraunce
To haue of hym the more acqueyntaunce
And of you whom I loue ſpecially
Aboue alle women ſikirly
This ſwere I you on my profeſſioun
Telleth your greef leſt he come doun
And haſtith you and go albey anon
My dere loue quod ſhe o ray John
Ful leef were me this counſel to hyde
But out it moot it may no lengir abyde
My huſbonde is to me the worſte man
That euer was ſith the worlde began
But ſith I he cam a wyf it ſittith not me
To telle no wight our priuyte
Neyther in bed ne in no place
God ſhilde I ſholde it telle for his grace
A wyf ſholde nat ſeyn of her huſbonde
But al honour as I can vnderſtonde
Saue vnto you thus muchel I telle ſhal
As helpe me god he is not worth at al
In no degre the value of a flye
But yet me greuith moſt his nygardye
And wete ye woot that women naturelly
Deſiren thingis as wel as do I

They Wolde that her huſbondis ſholde be
Hardy andy Wyſe/riche andy therto fre
Andy buxom to his Wyf andy freſſh a bedde
But by that ilke lordy that for Vs bledde
For his honour my ſelf to araye
A ſonday nexte J muſte nedis paye
Ay hundrid frankis or ellis J am lore
Yet Were J leuer to be Vnbore
Than me Were do diſclaunder or Vilony
Andy yf my huſbonde mighte it ſpye
J nere but loſt andy therfore J you pray
Lene me this ſumme or ellis muſte J dey
Dane John J ſay lene me this .C. frankis
Parde J Wol not fayle you my thankis
If that ye liſt to do that J you pray
For at a certayn day J Wol you pay
Andy doy to you What pleſaunce or ſeruiſe
That J ſhal doy right as ye can deuyſe
Andy but J do gody take oy me Vengeaunce
As foul as euer hade genyliouy of Fraunce
This gental monk anſWerde in this manere
Now trewly myn owen lady dere
J haue oy you quod he ſo gret a routhe
That J you ſWere andy plight my trouthe
That Whan your huſbonde is to flaundris fare
J Wol deliuer you out of this care
For J Wyl bryngе you an .C. frankis
Andy With ꝑ Wordy he caught her by the ſhankis
Andy here enbracedy harde & kiſte her ofte

Goth nowe your Wey quod he al ſtille & ſofte
And lete vs dyne as ſone as ye may
For be my kalander it is pryme of the day
Goth nowe and keep as trewe as I ſchal be
Nowe ellis god forbede ſir quod ſche
And forth ſche goth as ioly as a pye
And bad the cokis that they ſchulde hye
So that men mighte dyne atte none
Vp to her huſbonde is ſche goon
And knockith at his countour boldly
Who is there quod he Petir it am I
Quod ſche What ſire how longe Wol ye faſte
How longe tyme Wil ye rekyn and caſte
Your ſummys and your bokis & your thingis
The deuyl haue part of alle ſuche rekenyngis
Ye haue ynough parde of goddis ſonde
Com do my to day and leet your baggis ſtonde
Ne be ye not a ſchamyd that dame Johy
Shal faſtinge al this longe day goon
What lete vs go here amaſſe and go dyne
Ye quod this man litil canſt thou deuyne
The corrous beſines that We haue
For of vs chapmen al so god me ſaue
And by that lord that clepidis ſaint Jue
Scarcely among twies ten twelue ſchal thryue
Continuelly laſtyng to their age
We may Wel make chere and good viſage
And dryue forth the Worlde as it may be
And kepe our eſtat in priuyte

Tyl we be dey or ellis that we pleye
A pilgremage or goon out of the wey
And therfore haue I gret necessite
Up on this queynte worlde to auyse me
For euer more we muste stonde in drede
Of hap and foztune in our Chapmanhede
To Flaundris wol I go to morow at day
And come ayeen as sone as euer I may
For whiche dere wyf I the beseke
As be to euery wight buxum and meke
And forto kepe our goody be ordious
And honestly gouerne wel our hous
Thou hast ynough in euery maner wyse
That to a thrifty housold may suffise
The lackith none aray ne non vitayl
Of siluer in thy purs shalt thou not fayll
And with that word his countrefete he shit
And doun he goth he wolde no lenger lette
But hastely amasse was there said
And spedely the tablis were leid
And to dyner faste they hem spedde
And richely the chapman this monk fedde
And aftir dynere Dan John sobirly
This chapman toke apart propirly
And sayde hym thus, cosyn it stondith so
That wel I se to Briggis wol ye go
God and saint Augustyn spede you and gyde
I pray you cosyn wisely thedir ye ryde
Gouerne you also weel of your diete

Attemperly and namely in this tyde
Betwix vs two nedith no straunge fare
Farwel cosyn god shilde you fro care
And yf ony thing by day or by nyght
Yf it be in my power or in my might
That ye me wol comaunde in ony wyse
Hit shal be do right as ye wol deuyse
O thing or that ye goon yf it may be
I pray you to lene it vnto me
Ay hundrid frankis for a weke or tweye
For certeyn bestis that I must beye
To store with a place that is oures
God helpe me so I wolde it were youris
I shal not fayle surely of my day
Nat for a thousand frankis o myle way
But lete this thing be secret I you pray
For yet this nyght this bestis muste I bey
And fare now wel myn owen cosyn dere
Gromercy of your cost and of your chere
This nobil marchaunt and that anon
Answerde and sayde o cosyn myn dan John
Now sikirly this is a smal requeste
My goldy is youris what that ye liste
And not only my goldy but my chaffare
Take that ye list good shilde that ye spare
But o thing ye knowe wel I nough
Of chapmen that her money is her plough
We may creaunce whyles we haue a name
But goldlees forto be it is a shame

Pay it ayen Whan it lith at your ese
After my might fayne Wolde I you plese
Thyse hundrid frankis fette he forth anon
And priuely he took hem to dan John
No Wight of al this lond Wiste of this lone
Sauyng this marchaunt and dan John alone
They drynke and speke & rome a Whyle & pleye
Til that dan John rideth to his abbeye
The morwe cam & forth rideth this marchaunt
To flaundris Ward his prentis brought him auant
Til he com to Briggis Wel and merily
Now goth this marchaunt Wel and besily
About his nedis and creaunsith and bieth
He neyther pleyeth at the dys ne daunsith
But as a marchaunt shortly to telle
He ledde his lif and there I lete hym dWelle
The sunday next that this marchaunt Was a gon
To saint denys is comyn dan John
With croune and berd al fresh & newe shaue
In al this hous ther nas so litil a knaue
Ne no Wight ellis, but he Was ful fayn
That my lord dan John Was comyn agayn
And shortly to the point right forto goon
This faire Wyf acordith With dan John
That for his hundrid frankis he sholde al might
Haue here in his armys holt vp right
With her leggis al so brode and so Wyde
As of lengthe she may her self stryde
And this accorde parfourmyd is in dede

In mirthe al nyght a besi lif they lede
Day John fidelly on the Fibibil
His mynstralsie is swetter than the quynybil
Til it was day that day John yede his Way
And bad the meyne farwel & haue good day
For noy of hem ne no Wight in the toun
Hath of day John ony suspecioun
And forth he ridith hoom to his abbeye
Or where hym list nomore of hym I sey
This marchaunt whan that ended was the feire
To seynt denys he gan agayn repaire
And with his Wyf he makith feste and chere
And tellith here the chaffar is so dere
That nedis muste he make a cheuesaunce
For he was bounden in a recognysaunce
To paye twenty thousand scheldis anon
For whiche this marchaunt is to paris goon
To borowe of certeyn frendis that he hadde
A certayn of frankis & some with hym he ladde
And when that he was come in to the toun
For chiertе and greet affectioun
Unto day John he goth first hym to pleye
Nat forto aye ne borowe of hym moneye
But forto wite and se his welfare
And forto tellyn hym of his chaffare
As frendis doon when they mete in fere
Day John hym makith feste & mery chere
And he hym tolde ful specially
How he hadde spedd by and by

Thankid̄ be god̄ al hool his marchaundiſe
Saue that he muſte in alle maner wyſe
Makyn a cheueſaunce as for the beſte
And̄ than he ſholde be in ioye and̄ reſte
Dan̄ John̄ anſwerde certis I am̄ fayn̄
That ye in hele as comyn̄ home agayn̄
And̄ yf that I were riche as I haue blis
Of .ye. thouſandȳ ſheldis ſholde ye not mys
For ye ſo kyndely this othir day
Lent me goldȳ andȳ as I can̄ andȳ may
I thanke you be godȳ andȳ be ſeynt Jame
But natheles I took it vnto our dame
Your wyf at hoom̄ the ſame goldȳ ayn̄
Vp on̄ your bench ſhe woot it wel certeyn̄
Be certeyn̄ tokenys that I can̄ you telle
Now be your leue I may no lenger dwelle
Our abbot wol out of this town̄ anon̄
And̄ in his compan̄y muſt I goon̄
Grete wel our dame myn̄ owen̄ nece ſwete
And̄ farwel dere cosyn̄ til we mete
This marchaunt which p̄ was ful waar & wyſe
Creaunſid̄ hath andȳ paid̄ eke in̄ paris
To certeyn̄ lumbardis redy in̄ her hondȳ
The ſomme of golde andȳ gate of hem̄ his londȳ
And̄ hoom̄ he goth̄ as mery as a popingeay
For weel he knew he ſtoodȳ in̄ ſuch̄ aray
That nedis muſte he wynne in̄ that viage
A thouſandȳ frankis aboue al his coſtage
His wyf ful redy mette hym̄ atte yate

As ſhe was wont of oldy vſage algate
And al that nyght in mirthe they be ſet
For he was riche and cleerly out of det
Whan it was day the marchaunt gan embrace
His wyf al newe and kiſte her in the face
And vp he goth and maketh it ful tough
Nomore quod ſhe be gody ye haue ynough
And wantownly ageyn with hym ſhe playde
Tyl atte laſte the marchaunt thus ſayde
Be gody quod he I am a litil wroth
With you my wyf al though it be me loth
And woot ye why be gody as I geſſe
That ye haue maady a maner ſtraungeneſſe
Betwix me and my Coſyn day John
Ye ſholde haue warnedy me or I hady gon
That he hade you ay hundridy frankis paidy
Be redy token and heldy hym euyl apaidy
For that I to hym ſpak of cheueſaunce
Me ſemydy ſo as by his contenaunce
But natheles be gody our heuyn kyng
I thoughte to aye of hym no thing
I pray the wyf do nomore ſo
Tel me now or I fro the go
Yf ony dettour haue in myn abſence
Ypayedy the leſt be thy negligence
I mighte hym aye a thingy that he hath paidy
This wyf was not a ferdy ne affraidy
But boldly ſhe ſayde andy that anon
Mary I diffie that fals monk day John

I kepe not of his tokenys neuer a deel
He took me certeyn goldy that Wot I Wel
What euyl thedom oy his monkis snowte
For gody it Woot I Wende Withouten doute
That he hady yeue it me be cause of you
To do ther With myn honour andy my prowb
For osinage andy eke for belechere
That he hath hady ful ofte tymes here
But seth I se it stont in suche disioynt
I Wol answere you shortly to the poynt
Ye haue no slakker detour than am I
For I Wol paye you redely
Fro day to day yf so be I faylle
I am your Wyf shore it vp oy my tayl
Andy ellis I shal paye as sone as euer I may
For be my trouthe I haue oy myn aray
Andy nat in Wast bestowidy it euerideel
Andy for I haue bestowedy it so Weel
For your honour for goddis sake I sey
As be not Worth andy lete vs laughe andy pleye
Ye shal my ioly body haue to Wedde
Be gody I Wol not paye you but a bedde
Forgyue it me myn owen spouse dere
Turnyth hithir makith bettir chere
This marchaunt salw ther Was noy other remedy
Andy forto chide it Were but a foly
Syn that the thingy may not other be
Nowb Wyf he sayde andy I for yeue it the
Andy be thy lif be nomore so large

Kepe kettir thy goody this gyue I in charge
Thus endith my tale andy god ys sende
Talyngh ynough vnto our kyuys ende
Here endith the Shipmammys tale.

¶ Verba Hospitis.

WEl saidy by corpus dñs sayde our ost
Nolb longe moot thou sayle by the cost
Thou gentil maister gentil mariner
Gody yeue the monk a thousandy last quad yeer
A tha felolbes be Waar of suche a Jape
The monk put in the mammys hoody an ape
Andy in his Wyuys eek by saint Austyn
Draweth no monkes nomore to your Jme
But nolb pas ouer andy lete vs seke aboute
Who shal telle a tale first of al this Route
Another tale andy With that Wordy he sayde
As curteisly as it hadde be a mayde
My lady Prioresse by your leue
So that I Wiste I sholdy you nat greue
I Wolde deme that ye tellyn sholde
A tale next yf so Were that ye Wolde
Nolb Wil ye Voucheſauf my lady dere
Gladly quod she andy sayde as ye shul here

Here begynneth the Prioresses prologh
Domine dñs noster quã admirabile
est nomen tuũ in vniuersa terra.

HOrdy our lordy thy name euer merueilous
Is in this large Worlde I spredy quod she
For nat only thy laude precious

Parfourmedy is be men of dignyte
But by the mouth of childryn thy bounte
Parfourmydy is/for on thy breſt ſolbkyngy
Somtyme ſhelbdy they thyn herynge
Wherfore in laude as J can andy may
Of the andy of thy Whyte lily flour
Whiche that the baar andy is mayde alWay
To telle a ſtory J Wol do my labour
Not that y may encrece her honour
For ſhe her ſelf is honoure andy the rote
Of beaute next her ſon̄ andy ſoulis bote
O modir mayde O mayde andy moder free
O buſſh vnbrent brennyngy in Moyſes ſight
That raueyſſhedyſt doury from the deyte
Thorou thyn humbles the goſt that in the alight
Of Whoos vertu/Whyn be thyn herte Whit
Conceyuedy Was the fadris ſapience
Help me to telle it in thyn reuerence
Lady thy bounte thy magnificence
Thy vertu andy thy grete humylite
Ther may no tunge expreſſe in no ſcience
For ſomtyme lady or men praye the
Thow goſt beforn̄ of thy benignyte
Andy getiſt vs light of thy praiere
To gidyn vs vnto thy ſone ſo dere
My kompyngy is ſo Week o blyſſful quene
For to declare thyn high Worthyneſſe
That J ne may thy Wit ſuſtene
But as a childy of twelfmonth oldy of leſſe

That can bimeethe ony wordy expresse
Right so fare I andy therfore I you pray
Gidith my songe as I shal you say

Here endith the prioresses prology.
And here begynneth her tale.

THer was in asie in a gret citee
Among cristyn folk a Jurye
Susteyned by a lordy of that contre
For soul vsurye andy lucre of vilony
Hateful to crist andy to his company
Andy thorolh this streete men might ryde e wende
For it was fre andy opyn at euery ende
A litil scole of cristen folk ther stoody
Down atte ferther ende in which ther were
Childryn ay kept comyn of cristen bloody
That lernedy in scole yeer by yeer
Suche maner doctryne as men vsen here
This is to say to syngen andy to rede
As smale childreen doon in her childhede
Among thyse childryn was ther a widowis son
A litil clergion. vij. yeer of age
That day by day to scole was his wone
Andy eke also wher that he sawh the Jmage
Of cristis moder hady he in vsage
As hym was taught to knele a downy andy say
His Aue maria as he goth by the way
Thus hath this widowh har litil sone taught
Our blissedy lady cristis moder dere
To worship ay andy he forgat it nought

For the sely child Wolde alwey sone lere
But ay when I remembrid me on this matere
Seynt Nicholas stont euer in my presence
For he so yongh to crist did reuerence
This litil childe his litil book lernynge
As he sat in the scole at his prymere
He Alma redemptoris mater herd syngh
As childreh lernyd here antiphoner
And as he durste he drew hym nere and nere
And herkenyd ay the wordis and the note
Til he the firste vers coude al be rote
Naught wiste he what this latyn was to say
For he so yongh and tender was of age
But on a day his felow gan he pray
To expoune his songh and his langage
Or telle hym why this songh was in vsage
This prayde he hym to constrew and declare
Ful ofte tymes vp on his knees bare
His felow which that elder was than he
Answerde hym thus this songh I haue herd sey
Was makid of our blissid lady free
Her to salue and eke her forto preye
To be our help and socour when we deye
I can nomore expoune in this matere
I lerne songh I can but litil grammere
And is this songh maad in reuerence
Of cristis moder said this Innocent
Now certeyn I wol do my diligence
To conne it al or cristmas is al y went

Though that I for my prymer be shent
And sholde be bete thries in ay hour
I wol it comme our lady to honour
His felow taughte hym hombardy priuely
Fro day to day til he coude it al be rote
And thay he songh it wel and boldly
Fro wordy to wordy acordyngh to the note
Whis a day it passidy thorolh his thwote
To scolebardy andy hombardy whay he wente
Oy aristis modir set was al his entent
As I haue saidy thorou out the Jurye
This litil childy as he cam to andy fro
Ful merily wolde he synge andy arye
O alma redemptoris mater euer mo
The swetnesse his herte persidy so
Of aristis moder that he to her prey
He cay not stynte of singinge by the wey
Our firste foo the serpent sathanas
That hath in Jues herte his waspis nest
Vp swal andy sayde o ebreik pepil allas
Is this a thingh that is to vs honest
That suche aboy shal walkyn as hym list
In our despit andy synge of suche sentence
Whiche is ayenst our lawes reuerence
Fro thens forth the Jewis haue conspiridy
This Jnocent out of this worlde to chace
Ay homicide therto haue they hiridy
Right at ay aley at a pryue place
Andy as the childe gay forth by to pace

This cursid Jue hym hent and held faste
And cutte his throte and in a pit hym cast
I say that in a Warderobe they hym threw
Where as the Jnes purgid her entrayl
O cursid folk of herodis al newe
What may your cayl entent you auayl
Murdir Wol out certeyn it Wol not fayl
And namely as the honour of god shal sprede
The bloody out crieth on your cursid dede
Martir solwdid vnto virgynite
Nolw maist thou synge folowyng euer in on
The Whyte lamb celestial quod she
Of Whiche the grete euangelist saint John
In pathmos Wrote Whiche saith that they goon
Before this lamb & synge a song al newe
That neuer fleshly Woman they ne knewe
This poure Widow awaytith al nyght
After her litil child and he cam nought
For Whiche as sone as it Was daies light
With face pale and drede and besy thought
She hath at scole and ellis Where hym sought
Tyl finally so fer she gan to espye
That he last Was seyn in the Jurye
With modirs pyte in her herte enclosid
She goth as she Were half oute of her mynde
To euery place Where she hath supposid
By liklihede her child for to fynde
And euer on cristis moder meke and kynde
She cryde and at the last thus she Wrought

Among the cursid Jues she hym soughte
She with and she freyneth pitously
Of euery Jue that duellid in that place
To telle her yf her child Wente aught forth by
They sayde nay but Jhesu of his grace
Yaf in her thought With ynne a litil space
That in that place aftir her son she cryde
Where he Was cast in a pit beside
O grete god that parfourmyst thy laude
By mouth of Jnocentis lo here thy might
This gemme of chastite this emeraudy
And eke of martirdom the Ruby bright
There he With throte J oruyn lith bright
He Alma redemptoris gan to synge
So loude that al the place gan rynge
The cristen folk that by the strete Went
In cam forto Wondir Vp on this thing
And hastely they for the Prouost sent
Whiche fonde the childe freshly yet bledyng
And herieth crist that is of heuene kyng
And eke his modir honour of mankynde
And aftir that the Jues lete he bynde
This child With petous lamentacion
Vp takyn Was synging this song alWey
And With honour and gret procession
They carye hym in to the neyte abbey
His modir sWomyng by his bere lay
Vnneth might the pepil that Was there
This sorouful rachel meue from the bere

With turment & With ſhamful deth echon
This prouoſt doth thyſe Jues forto ſterue
That of this murdir Wiſt andy that anon
He nolde no ſuche curſidnes obſerue
Euyl ſhal he haue that euyl Wol deſerue
Wherfore With Wilde hors he didy hem draWe
Andy aftir hangidy hem by the laWe
Vpon his bere ay lieth this Jnocent
Before the hy anter Whyle the high maſſe laſt
Andy aftir that the abbot andy his couent
Hem ſpedde forto bery hym ful faſt
Andy Whan they holy Water on hym caſt
Yet ſpak this childy Whan ſpreynt it Was
He ſangy o Alma redemptoris m the plas
This abbot Whiche that Was an holy man
As monkes ben or ellis oughte to be
This yonge childy to coniure he began
Andy ſayde o dere childy J halouſe the
Jn the vertu of the holy trinite
Tel me What is thy cauſe for to ſynge
Syn that thy throte is cut to my ſemynge
My throte is kut Vnto myn neckeboon
Sayde this childy andy as be Wey of kynde
J ſholde a deide longy tyme agoon
But Jheſu as ye m bokis fynde
Wol that his glory laſte andy be m mynde
Andy for the Worſhip of his moder dere
Yet may J ſynge o alma loude andy clere
This Welle of mercy criſtis moder ſWete

I louyd alwey and dy afte my kommynge
And when that I my lif sholde forlete
To me she cam and bad me forto synge
This anteme stedily in my dyinge
As ye haue herd and when that I had songe
Me thoughte she leyde a greyn on my tonge
Wherfore y synge and synge muste certeyn
In honour of that blissed mayde fre
Til fro my tonge taken is the greyn
And after thus sayde she to me
My litil child thou wol I feche the
When that the greyn is fro thy tonge I take
Be not agast I wil the not forsake
This holy monk this abbot of hym mene I
His tunge out caughte & toke alwey the greyn
And he yaf vp the goost ful softely
And when this abbot had this meruayl sayn
His salt teris trilled down as reyn
And grouelinge he fyl to the grounde
And stille he lay as he had be y bounde
The couent eke lay vp on the pament
Weppynge and sherynge cristis moder dere
And after that vp they roos & forth they went
And toke alwey this martir fro his bere
And in a tombe of marbil stonys clere
Enclosyn they this litil body swete
There he is now god leue vs forto mete
O yonge hewe of lincoln slayn also
With cursed Jues as it is notabil

For it is but a lityl whyle a go
Prey eke for vs we sinful folk vnstabil
That of his mercy/godly so merciable
On vs his grete mercy multiplye
For reuerence of his modir Mary

Here endith the prioressez tale.

Than said was this myrakil euery man
As sobir was that wonder was to se
Til that our ost to iapply began
And than at erst he lokid vp on me
And sayde thus what maner mā art thou qd he
Thou lokist as thou woldist fynde an hare
For euer vp on the grownd I se the stare
Approche neer and loke vp merily
Now ware sirs and lete this man haue place
He is shape in the wast as wel as I
This were a popet in an arm to embrace
For ony woman smal and fair of face
He semyth elvysshe be his contenaunce
For vnto no wight doth he daliaunce
Say now sumwhat syn other folk haue said
Tel vs a tale of mirthe and that anon
Hoste quod I ne be not ayl apaid
For othir tale certeyn can I noon
But of a ryme I lernyd longe a goon
Ye quod he that is good ynow let vs here
Hom depnte thing me thynkith be thy chere

Ryme of sir Topas.

Ystey lordis in good entent

And J wol telle tretament
Of mirthe and of solace
Of a knyght fair and gent
In batayl and in turnament
His name was sir Thopas
I borne he was in fer contre
In Flaundris al be yond the se
At Poperyng in the place
His fadir was a man ful fre
A lord he was of that contre
As it was goddis grace
Sir Thopas wext a doughty swey
Whit was his face as paynemey
His lippis rede as rose
His rode is lik scarlet in grey
As J telle you in good certey
He hadde a semely nose
His heer his berd was lik saffron
That to his girdil raught a down
His shoon of cordewey
Of briggis were his hosyn broun
His robe was of sicladoun
That coste many a Jan
He coude hunte atte wilde deer
And ryde an hakkyng for ryuere
With grey goshauk in honde
Therto he was a greet archer
Of wrastlyng was ther none his peer
Ther ony ram sholde stonde

They mooznyd for hym par amour
Whan hem were let to slepe
But he was chast and no lechour
And swete as is the brembil flour
That berith the rede hepe
And so it fil vp on a day
For sothe as I you telle may
Sir Thopas wolde out ryde
He wolde vp on his hors bay
And in his hond a launcegay
A long swerd be his syde
He pryked thowu a fair forest
Ther ynne is many a wilde best
Ye bothe buk and hare
And as he pryked north and est
I telle it you hym hadde almest
Betyd a sory care
Ther sprongen herbis grete and smale
The licorice and the Cetuale
And many a cloue gilofer
And notemygh to put in ale
Whethir it be moist or stale
Or for to ley in Cofir
The briddis synge it is no nay
The sperhauke and the Popmgeay
That ioye was to here
The throstil made eke his lay
The wode wolue vp on the spray
He sangh ful loude and clere

Sir Thopas fil in loue longinge
Al whey he herde the throstil synge
And prikid as he were woody
Hes faire stede in his prikynge
So swette that men might hym wrynge
His sidis were al bloody
Sire Thopas eke so wery was
For prikyng in the softe gras
So fiers was his corage
That doun he leyde hym in the place
To make his stede sum solace
And yaf hym goody forage
A sainte marie benedicite
What aylith this loue at me
To bynde me so soze
Me dremyd al this nyght parde
An elf quene schold my lady be
And slepe vnder my goore
An elf quene wol I haue ywis
For in this worlde no woman is
Worthy to be my make in towne
Al othir women I forsake
And to an elf quene y me take
Be dale and eke be downe
And to his sadil he clamb anone
And prikid ouer stile and stoon
An elf quene to aspye
Til he so longe hath riden and goon
That he foundy a priuy wone

In the contre of fairy
For in that auntre Was ther nony
Neythir Wyf ne child one
That he hady of ony drede
Tyl that ther cam a gret geaunt
His name Was sir Olyphaunt
A parlous many of dede
Andy sayde childy be termegaunt
But yf thou pryke out of myn haunt
Anone I sle thy stede With mace
Here is this quene of fairye
With harpe andy pype andy simphonye
Duellynge in this place
The childy sayde al so mot I the
To morolb Wil I mete With the
Whey that I haue myn armure
Andy yet I hope par ma fay
Or it be fully pryme of the day
For here shalt thou be slaWe
Sir Thopas drelb a bak ful faste
The geaunt at hym stones caste
Out of a fel staf slynge
But faire ascapidy sir Thopas
Andy al Was thorough goddis grace
Andy thorough his fair kerynge
Yet lestenyth lordyngy to my tale
Merier than the nyghtyngale
I Wil With you woun
Holb sir Thopas With sidys smale

Prikyngh ouer hill andh dale
Is comyn agayn to toun
His mery men comaundith he
To makeh hym bothe game andh gle
For nedis must hym fighte
With a geaunt With heddis thre
Ful of paramour andh iolyte
Of ſom̃e that ſhoon ſo bright
Com hithir he ſayde my mynſtralis
Andh geſtours for to telle talis
Anone im myn armynge
Of Romaunce that been Ryal
Of Popis andh of Cardinal
Andh eek of loue longynghe
They fet hym ferſt ſwete Wyne
Andh mede im a maſſelyne
Andh ryal ſpicerey
Of gyngerbreed that Was ſo fyn
Andh licorice andh eek comyn
With ſugir that is cry
He didh next his Whit lere
Of cloth of layke fyne andh clere
A breche andh eke a ſherte
Andh next his ſherte an haketon
Andh ouer that an habergeon
For perſingh of his herte
Andh ouer that a fyn hanberk
Was al y Wrought of Jupis Werk
Ful ſtrongh it Was of plate

And ouer that his cote armure
As Whit as is the lily flour
In Whiche he Wol debate
His sheld Was al of gold so reed
And therynne Was a bores hed
A karbokil be his syde
And there se swoor an ale and bred
Holb that the Jeaunt shal be ded
Betyde What may be tyde
His Jambeaux Were of quyreboly
His swerdis shethe of Juory
His helm of latoun bright
His sadyl Was of reWelbone
His bridyl as the some shoon
Or as the mone light
His spere Was of fyn Cypresse
That bedith Werre and no thing pees
The hed ful sharp y grounde
His stede Was al dappyl grey
It goth an ambil in the Way
Ful softely and wounde
Lo lordis here is o fit
If ye Wol ony more of it
To telle yet Wil I fonde
Wb holdy your mouth pour charite
Bothe knyght and lady fre
And herkenyth to my spelle
Of a bataylle of chyualrye
And of ladyes loue drury

Anon J wil you telle
Mery spekyn of Romaunces of price
Of hornchildy andy of Jpotise
Of beues andy of sir Guy
Of sir libeup andy of sir playndemour
But sir Thopas berith the flour
Of yial Chyualrye
His gode stede he gan be stryde
Andy forth vp on his wey he ryde
As sparcle out of bronde
Vp on his creste he baar a tour
Andy there ynne stikidy a lily flour
Gody schilde his body from schonde
Andy for he was a knyght aunterous
He nolde slepyn in none hous
But liggen in his hoody
His bright helm was his wonger
Andy by hym lith his destrer
Oy herbis fyn andy goody
Hym self drank water of the welle
As didy the knyght sir percyuelle
So worthily vnder weedy

O moze quod our ost for goddis dignite
For thou so merey makist me
Of thy merry lewdnesse
That also wis my soule bles
Myn eris aky of thy draffty speche
Suche another ryme the deuyl J beteche
This may wel be a ryme dogerel quod he

Why ſo quod J Why Wolt thou let me
Moze of my tale than another man
Syn it is the beſte Ryme that J can
Be gody quod he ful plainly at o Wozde
Thy draſty rymynge is not Wordy a tozdy
Thou doſt naught ellis but ſpendiſt tyme
Sir at o Wordy thou ſhalt no lengir Ryme
Let ſe Wher thou canſt aught telle in geſte
Oz telley in proſe ſumWhat that the liſt
In Whiche ther may be ſomy mirthe oz ſomy doctrine
Gladly quod J be goddis ſWete pyne
J Wol you telle a litil thyngy in proſe
That oughte like you as J ſuppoſe
Oz ellis certis ye been to daungerous
It is a moral tale vertuous
Albe it toldy ſomtyme in ſondry Wyſe
Of ſondry folk as J ſhal you deuyſe
Andy thus ye Woot that euery euangeliſt
That telle Vs the paſſyon of criſt
Ne ſaith not al thingy as his felaw doth
But natheles her ſentence is al ſoth
Andy al accordinge as in her ſentence
Al be ther in her tellnigy difference
For ſomy of hem ſaith moze andy ſomy leſſe
Whey they his pitous paſſion expreſſe
J mene of Mark Mathew Luke andy Johy
But doutles her ſentence is al oy
Therfore lordingis J you beſeche
If that ye thynke J vary in my ſpeche

As thus though that I telle somdeel more
Of prouerbis than ye haue herd before
Comprehendid in this litil tretis here
To enforce with the effect of my matere
And though I not the same wordis say
As ye haue herd yet to you alle I pray
Blameth me not for as in my sentence
Shulle ye nowe here fynde no difference
For the sentence of this trete lite
After the whiche mery tale this I write
And therfore harkenyth what I shal say
And lete me telle my tale I you pray

Sequitur Chalcers tale.

A Yonge man that calledy Was Melleb̃eus the Whiche Was mighty andy riche/begat a doughter Upon his Wyf that Callyd Was Prudence Whiche dough/ ter Callyd Was sophie/ Upon a day befyll that he for his disporte Wente hym in to the feldes for to playe/ His Wyf & his doughter hath he left Wyth in his holds of Whiche the dores Were fast shytte/ Thre of his olde Foes haue hit aspiedy andy setten ladders Unto the Walles of his holds andy by the Wyndowes ben entryd in/ andy bete his Wyf/ & Woundedy his doughter Wyth fyue mortel Woundes in fyue sondry places/ that is to saye in her feet. in her hondes. in her eeris. in her nose. andy in her mouth/ Andy lefteny her for dedy andy Wenteny her Waye/ Whan Melleb̃eus retorneday Was in to his hous andy salbe alle this myschief/ he like a mady man tenteyng his clothes began to Wepe andy to crye.

Prudence his Wif as ferforth as she durst besoughte hym of his Wepyng to stynte/ but not forthy he began to Wepe andy crye euer lenger the more/ This noble Wyf prudence Remembridy her Upon the sentence of Ouyde in his book that clepedy is the Remedye of loue/ Where as he saith/ He is a fool that distrobleth the moder to Wepe in the deth of her childy/ tal she hath Wepte her fille as for a certayn terme/ Andy than shal a man do his diligence With amyable Wordes her to comforte/ Andy praye her of her Wepyng to cese/ For Whiche reason this noble Wyf prudence suffridy her husbondy to Wepe & crye as for a certayn space Andy Whan she salbe her tyme/ she saidy to hym in this Wise Alas my lordy saydy she Why make ye your self for to be

lyke a fool ffor sothe hit appertayneth not to a wise man to make suche sorowe your doughter by the grace of god shall wax fre escape. And alle were hit so that she right now were dede/ ye ne ought not for her deth your self to destroye. Senek saith/ the wise man shal not take to grete discõforte for the deth of his childrey/ but certes he shuldy suffre hit in pacience as wel as he abideth the deth of his owen ppre psone

THis Melleleus answerdy anoñ and seide/ What may holdy of his wepyngy stynte that hath so grete cause to wepe. Jhesu Crist our lordy hym self wepte for the deth of lazarus his frende. Prudence answerde certes wel I wote a temparate wepyng is nothingy defendedy to hym that is sorowfull among folk in sorowe But it is rather grauntedy hym to wepe. The apostle Paule vnto the Rom mayns wryteth/ Many shal reioyse with hem that make ioye andy wepe with sucke folke as pyne. But a tempate wepyng though it be grantedy hym/ Outrageous wepyngy certes is defendedy/ Mesure of wepyngy shulde be considerydy after the lore that Seneke techeth vs/ Whan that thy frende is dede saidy he/ Lete not thyn eyen be to moyste of teerys ne to moche drye. Al though thy teerys come to thyn eyen late hem not falle/ And whan thou hast lost thy frende/ do diligently to gete the another frende/ And this is better than for to wepe for thy frende Whiche thou hast lofte/ For therin is no bote/ And therfore yf thou gouerne the by sapience put alway sorowe out of thy herte.

REmembre the thot Jhesus sirak saith/ that a man that is ioyous & glady in herte/ hit hym conserueth florisshingy in age. & sothly sorowful herte maketh his bones drye

He ſaith eke thus that ſorwe in herte ſleeth ful many a
man/Salamon ſaith that right as mothehis in the ſheep
flees anoieth the clothes/And the ſmale Wormes the trees
Right ſo anoieth ſorwe the herte of a man. Wherfore we
ought as Well in the deth of our children as in the loſſe of
our goodes temporel haue pacience. Remembrynge on the
pacient Job. Whan he hadde loſt his children and his temporel
goodes and hadde endured many a ſull greuous temptacõn
Yet ſaide he thus. Our lorde hath geuen hit to me. Our
lorde hath beraft hit me/right ſo as our lorde hath Wolde
right ſo hit is don/y blessid be the name of our lorde. ey

TO thiſe forſaidē thinges answerde Melleleus to his
Wyf Prudence alle thy Wordes bey ſoth ſaide he and
therto prouffitable/But trewly myn herte is troubled With
this ſorwe ſo greuouſly that I Wote not What to doo/Late
alle thy trewe frendes ſaide prudence and alle thy lignage
Whiche that bey Wiſe come vnto the/and telle to them your
caas/And herkene What they saye in counceyllynge and
gouerne yow after her ſentence/Salomon ſaith Werke alle
thy thynges by counceyll and thou ſhalt neuer repente/
Thay be cauſe of the counceyll of his Wyf Prudence/this
Melleleus lete callen a grete cõgregation of folk as Cirur
giens/Phiſiciens/olde folke. and ponge/and ſom of his
olde enmyes reconcileth as by their ſemblance to his loue &
to his grace and ther With all cam ſome of his neyghebours
that dide hym reuerence more for drede than for loue as hit
happeth ofte/Ther comen also many ſubtil flaterers and
Wiſe aduocates lernyd in the lawe/And Whan thiſe folke
to gider aſſembled Were/This Melleleus sheWed to hem

in sorowful wise his taas/ And by the maner of his speche hit semed that in his herte he hare a cruel yre redy to do ven geance vpon his foos/ And sodenly desired that he sholde kepyme the warre/ But neuertheles yet axed he their coun cyll vpon this mater. A cyrurgien by licence and assente of suche as were wyse rose vp. And to Melleeus sayde as ye may here.

Sire said he as to vs Cirurgiens/ hit apperteyneth that we do to euery wight the beste that we can do. Where as we be withholden and to our pacyente that we do no dommage/ Wherfore hit happeth many tyme and ofte That whan two men hauee the other wounded one cirurgien heleth hem bothe. Wherfore vnto our arte hit is not perty/ nent to norisshe warre/ ne partyes to supporte/ But certes as to the warisshyng & heelyng of your doughter al be it so that she be perilously hurt & wounded/ we shal do ententyf besynes fro day to day/ that with the grace of god she shal be hool & sound as sone as possible is. Almost in the same wyse the phisiciens answerd saue that they saiden a fewe wor des moo/ That right as maladyes ben cured be their contra ryes/ right so shal men warisshe warre by pees. This feyned frendes that semed reconciled and his flaterers made sem blaunt of wepyng & empeyred & grucchid moche in this ma ter. Preysing gretly Melleeus of might/ Of power of ry chesse & of frendes/ dispreysing the power of his aduersaryes And said vtterly/ that he anone sholde wrekyn hym on his aduisaries begynnyng warre/ vp woose than an aduocate that was wyse/ by leue and by counceyll of other that were wyse And sayde lordynges for the nede whiche we ben assembled

in this place/is full heuy thingy andy high mater/be cause of the Wronge and of the Wilkednes that hath be don̄ andy eke be reson of the grete domages that in tyme comyngy be possible to falle for the same/And eke be reson of the grete Richesse & of the power of the parties bothe/For the Whiche hit Were a full grete paryll to erren in this mater/Wher for Melleteus this is oure entente/We counceylle yow, a boue all thingy that right anone thou do diligence in kepinge of thy proper persone in suche Wise that thou ne Wante none espye ne Wacche, thy body for to saue/And after in thy hous We counceylle that thou sette sufficient garnyson so as they maye as Well thy body as thy hous defende/But certes for to meue Warre ne sodenly for to do Vengeance We may not deme in so litil tyme that hit sholdy be prouffytable/Wher fore We axen leyser andy space to haue deliberation in this caas to deme/For the comyn prouerbe saith thus/He that sone demeth, sone shal repente/Andy eke men saye that that Juge is Wyse that sone Vnderstandeth a mater and Jugeth be leyzer/For al be hit so that taryengy be noyeful/Algates it is not to be reproued in yauyng of Jugement ne in Ven/ geance takyng Whan it is sufficient and resonable/And that shewed our lord Jhesu crist be ensample For Whan the Woman that Was taken in avoultrye Was brought in his presence to knowe What shold be do of her persome/al be hit that he Wiste Wel hym self What he Wold doo/yet ne Wolde he answere sodeynly but he Wold haue deliberation/and in the grouudy he Wrote tWyes/And be this cause We aye delibera tion Andy We shal than by the grace of god counceylle you that thing that is most prouffytable. Vp sterte than the

yongh folk attones and the moste parte of this companye
haue sworne this olde wyse man & begonne to make noise
and saiden. Right so as while that yron is hoot men shold
smyte Right so while that this thing is fresshe and newe
sholde men wreken her wronges. and with a lowde voys they
cryden warre warre. Up wose than one of thise olde wise
men And made contenance with his honde that men sholde
holde hem stille & yeue hym audience/ Lordinges saidh he ther
is ful many a man that cryeth warre warre that wote ful
litylle what warre amounteth / warre at his begynnyngh
hath so grete an entre and so large that euery wight may
entre whan hym liketh & lightly fynde warre/But certes
what ende that therof shal falle it is not lyghte to knowe.
For sothly whan that warre is ones begonne/ther is ful
many a childe vnborn of his moder that shal deye & sterue
yongh be cause of that warre or ellis lyue in sorowe or deye
in wrecchidnesse/And therfore or ony warre begynne men
muste haue grete counceyll & grete deliberation And whan
this olde man wende to haue enforced his tale by resons.
wel nyghe attones began they alle taryse for to breke his
tale & bad ful faste his wordes tabregge. For sothly who
so precheth to hem that haue no luste to here his tale/his wor
des or his sermon anoyeth hem. For Jhesus sirak saith that
musyke in wepingh is a noyous thingh/This is as moche
to saye/As moche auaylleth to speke before folke/to whom
his speche anoyeth / As it doth to synge before hym that
wepeth. And whan this olde man sawe that he wanted
audience. al shamefast he sette hym down agayn. For Sa
lamon sayth/There as thou maist haue none audyence.

enforce the not to speke/ I see wel saidy this wise may that the comyn prouerbe is soth/ That goody counceyll wanteth whan hit is most nede +

Yet hady this Melleboeus in his counceyll many folk that priuely in his ere counceilledy hym certayn thinges andy counceilledy hym contrary in general audience/ Whan Melleboeus salbe that the gretteste parte of his counceill were accordedy that he sholde make warre/ anoy he condescendedy to their counceillyngh andy fully affermedy their sentence +

My lorde saide Prudence I yolb beseche as hertly as I dar andy can ne haste yolb not to faste/ Andy for alle guerdons as yeue me audience/ For piers alfons saith who so doth to the other goody or harme haste the not to acquyte hit/ For in this wise thy frende wille abyde/ Andy thyn enemye shal the lenger lyue in drede/ The prouerbe saith he hasteth wel that can abyde wisely/ Andy in wikkedy haste is no prouffyt +

This Melleboeus answerdy to his wyf prudence/ I purpose not saidy he to werke be thy counceyll for many causes and resons/ For certes euery wight woldy holdy me than a fool/ this is to saye/ yf I for thy counceillyngh wolde chaunge thinges that ben ordeynedy & affermedy by so many wyse peple/ Secondly I saye that alle women ben wickedy & none goody of hem alle/ For of a thousandy men saith Salamon I fonde one goody/ But of alle women/ certes goody woman fonde I neuer nony/ Andy also certes yf I gouerne me be thy counceyll/ hit sholdy seme that I hady gyue to the ouer me the maistrye/ Andy gody forbede that hit were soo/ For Jhesus syrak saith that yf thy wyf haue the maistrie

She is contraryous to her husbonde And salamon saith to thy wif ne to thy childe ne to thy frende neuyr in thy lyf ne yaue power ouer thy self For better it were that thy childrey aye of the thinges that hem nedeth/than thou se thy self in ꝑ hondes of thy childrey/and certes yf I sholde werke by counceillyng my counceille muste be somtyme secrete tyl hit were tyme that hit muste be knowe/And this may not be yf I sholde be counceilled by the For women can kepe no counceille

Than dame Prudence ful debonairly & with grete pacience had herde alle that her husbonde liked for to saye than ayed she of hym licence for to speke & said in this wise My lorde said she as to your first reson hit may lightly be answerd For I saye that hit is no folye to chaunge counceille whan the thing is chaunged or ellis whan the thing semeth other wise than hit was before/and more ouer I saye though that ye haue sworn & behight to performe your empryse and be Just cause ye do it not/men sholde not saye therfore that ye were a lyer ne forsworn For the book saith/that the wise mā maketh no lesynge whan he torneth his corage to the better And al be it so that your empryse be establissh̄id & ordeyned be grete multitude of peple/yet dar ye not accomplysshe that same ordenance but you like/ For ꝑ trouthe of thinges & the prouffit be rather founde ī felwe folk that ben wise & ful of reson than be grete multitude of peple where euery mā chatereth what ꝑ hym liste/sothli suche multitude of peple is not honest And to ꝑ seconde reson where as ye sayn that alle women ben wicked/saue your grace/Certes ye despise alle women in this wise/& he that alle despiseth/alle displeseth as saith ꝑ book. & Seneke saith who so wole haue sapience shal nomā dispreise

But he shal gladly teche the science that he can Withoute presumption or pride/and̄ suche thinges as he can not/he shal not be ashamed̄ for to lerne hem and enquyre of lasse folk than hym self/And that ther hath be many a good̄ Woman Hit may be preuyd̄/For Criste Wolde neuer descende for to be bory of a Woman/yf alle Women had̄ be Wicked̄/And after that for the grete bounte that is in our lord̄ Jhesu crist Whan he Was risen from deth to lyf/Apperid̄ rather to a Woman than to his apostles/And though that Salamon saide he fonde neuer Woman good/yet foloweth not therfore that alle Women ben Wicked/For though he fonde no good Woman certes many another may hath foundē many a Woman full good/and full trewe/or ellis pauenture thentent of Salamon Was this that in souerain bounte he fonde no Woman/This is to saye/that ther is noo Wight so good that he ne Wanteth som̄ of the perfection of god that is his maker.

Our thirde reson is this/ye saye that yf ye gouerne yow be my counceyll hit shold̄ seme that ye had̄ yeue me the maistrye and the lordship ouer your persone/Sire saue your grace/hit is not so/yef hit so Were that noman shold̄ be counceylled but only of hem that had̄ lordship and maistrye of his persone/Men Wold̄ not be counceylled̄ so ofte as they ben/For sothly that man that axeth counceyll of a purpos/yet hath he his fre chois Whether he Wil Werke by that counceyll or not. And as to your fourth reson there that ye saye that the Janglerye of Women can not hyde thinges that they knowe/as Who saith a Woman can not hyde that she Woot. Syr thise Wordes ben to vnderstande of

Women that ben Janglerefſes & wickyd/of whiche women
men ſaye/that thre thinges dryuen a man ſone out of his
hous/that is to ſaye. ſmoke. droppyngh of rayn and wicked
wyues/And of ſuche women ſaith Salamon/that it were
better to dwellen in deſerte/than with a woman that is ryo
tous. and ſyr be your leue that am not J For ye haue ſuff
ofte aſſaied my grete ſilence and my grete pacience And
eke hold weel J can hyden and hele thinges that men ought
ſecretly to hyde. And ſothly as to your fyfthe reſon where
that ye ſaye that in wicked counceill women Raynquyſſh
men/godd wote that reſon ſtandeth here in no ſtede For vn
derſtonde nold that ye aye counceyll to do wickednes And
yf ye wole werke wyckednes. And your wyf reſtrayne
that wickyd purpos and ouercome yold by reſon and by
good counceyll. Certes your wif ought rather to be praiſed
than to be blamed. Thus ſhold ye vnderſtond the philo
ſophre that wicked women Raynquyſhe her huſbondes And
ther as ye blamen alle women & her reſons/J ſhal ſhewe be
enſample that they be good & prouffytable. Eke ſome men
haue ſaid that the counceyll of women is to dere. or ellis to
litil of prys. But al be hit ſo that many women be bad/&
her counceill eupl & nothing worth/yet haue men founde ful
many a good woman/and diſcrete & wiſe in counceyllyngh
Lo Jacob be the counceyll of his moder Rebeca wan the bleſ
ſyng of yſaac his fader & the lordſhip ouer alle his bretheren
Judith be her good counceill deliuerid the cyte of bethule in
whiche ſhe dwellyd out of the handes of oliphernes that had
beſieged it & wold haue it deſtroied Abigail deliuerid Na
bal her huſbond fro dauid ꝑkyng that wold haue ſlain hym

And preſidy the yre of the kynge by her Witte andy by her goody counceyll/heſter le her counceyll enhaunſedy gretly the peple of gody in the Regne of aſſuerus the kynge/And the ſame bounte in goody conceyllyngy of many a goody Womany men may telle/And eke more ouer Whan our lordy god hady made adany our former fader/he sayde in this Wise/hit is not goody may to be allone/make We to hym an helpe sembla-ble to hym ſelf lo here may ye ſee that yf Women Were not goody andy her counceyll goody and prouffytable/our lordy gody of heuen Woldy neuer haue Wrought hem/ne calledy hem helpe of may/but rather confuſion of may/And ther ſaidy ones a clerk in tWo verſis/What is better than Jaſper. Wiſe dom. And What is better than Wiſedom/Womany/and What is better than goody Womany/no thingy/And ſo ſir by many other reſons may ye ſee that many Women been goody and their counceyll goody & prouffytable/And therfore yf ye Wille truſte to my counceillyngy I ſhal reſtore yolb your doughter hool and ſounde/Andy eke I Wil doo ſo moche that ye ſhal haue honour in this caas/Whan Melleebe hady herdy the Wor des of his Wif Prudence/He sayde thus/I ſee Wel that the Worde of Salamon is ſoth/He ſaith that Wordes that ben ſpoken diſcretly by ordenance been honycombes for they yeue ſWetenes to the ſoule and holſomnes to the body/Be cauſe of thy ſWete Wordes andy eke for I haue aſſaiedy & preuydy thy grete ſapience andy thy grete trouthe I Wil gouerne me by thy counceill in alle maner thingy/Nolb ſire ſaidy dame Prudence/ſyn ye Vouchesauf to be gouernedy be my counceyll I Wil enforme yolb holb ye ſhal gouerne yolb in cheſingy of your counceyll/Firſt to fore alle Werkis ye ſhalle beſeche

the hyghe godʒ that he be your counceyll. And ʃhape yoll
to ſuche entente that he yeue yoll counceyll and comforte.
As Thobye taught his ſone. At alle tymes thou ſhalt
pleſe and praye hym to dreſſe thy Weyes / And loke that
alle thy counceyll be in hym for euermore. Saynt Jame
eke ſaith / Yf ony of yoll haue nede of ſapience Aye hyt
of godʒ. And after that than ſhalt ye take counceyll in
your ſelf / And examyne Well your thoughtys of ſuche
thynges as ye thynke that ben beſte for your prouffyt /
And than ſhalt ye dryue alway from your hertes tho thyn
ges that ben contraryous to goodʒ counceill / this is to ſaye
Jre. couetyſe. and haſtynes. Firſt he that ayeth counceyll
of hym ſelf / Certes he muſte be Without yre for many
cauſes / The fyrſt is this that he that hath grete Jre and
Wrath in hym ſelf. he Weneth alway to do thingʒ that he
may not doo. And ſecondly he that is Jrous and Wrathfull may not deme Well / And he that may not deme Well
may not Well counceyll. Another is this / that he that is
Jrous and Wrathfull as ſaith ſeneke may not ſpeke but
blameful thinges / And With his vicyous Wordes / he ſte
ryth other folke to anger and to Jre. And eke fyr ye
muſte dryue couetyſe out of your herte / For thapoſtle ſaith
that couetyſe is the Pote of all harmes. And truſte Well
that a couetous man can not deme Well ne thinke but only
to fulfylle the ende of hys couetyſe and certes that may
neuer be accomplyſſhyd. For euermore the more habound-
dance a man hath of Rycheſſe / the more he deſyreth.
And ye muſte alſo dryue out of your herte haſtynes.

For certes ye may not deme for the reste hastely a soden thought that falleth in your herte/but ye muste auise yow ony hit ful ofte/ For as ye herde to fore the comyn prouerbe/ Whiche is this/he that sone demeth sone repenteth/Syre ye be not alway in like disposition/ For certes somtyme/suche thinge as semeth that is goody for to doo/Another tyme hit semeth to yow the contrarye/And whan ye haue take counceill in your self & haue demedy by goody deliberacõn suche thinge as semeth yow best/Than I counceille yow to kepe hit secrete/And bewreye not your counceyll to ony persone but yf hit so be that ye wene sikerly/that thorugh your bewreynge your condition shal be to yow the more prouffytable/ For Jhesus sirak saith/neyther to thy frende/ne to thy foo discouer not thy secrete counceyll/ne thy folye/ For they will yeue the audience/lokynge and supportynge in your presence/And scorne yow in your absence/Ay other clerk saith that scarsely shal thou fynde ony persomne that may kepe counceyll secretly/The book saith Whilis that thou kepest thy counceyll in thy herte/thou kepest hit in thy prison And whan thou wreyest hit to ony wight he holdeth the in his snare/And therfore hit is better to hyde your counceyll in your herte/than praye hym to whom ye haue bewreyd your conceyll that he wole kepe it cloes & stille For Seneca saith/yf hit so be that thou ne may thy counceill hyde/How darst thou pray ony other wight to hyde thy counceyll and kepe hit secrete. But natheles yf thou wene sikerly that thy bewreyynge of thy counceyll to a persomne will make thy condition stonde in the better plight/than shal thou telle hym thy counceyll as in this wise/ First thou shalt make

no ſemblaūce whether they were leuer pees or werre. or this
or that. ne ſhewe hym not thy wyll ne thyn entente/ For
truſte well that comunly theſe counceyllours ben flatterers
namely the counceyllours of grete lordes/ For they enforce
them alway rather to ſpeke plaiſaūt wordes enclynyng to
the lordes luſte/than wordes that ben trewe and prouffitable
And therfore men ſayn that the riche man hath ſelde whaū
good counceyll but yf he haue hit of hym ſelf And after
that thou ſhalt conſidere thy frendes and thyn ennyes/and
as touching thy frendes thou ſhalt conſidere whiche of hem
ben moſt trewe wiſeſt. moſt feythfull. olderſt and moſt ap
proued in counceyllyng And of hem ſhalt thou aye thy
counceyll as the caas requyreth/ I ſaye firſt that ye ſhal
clepe to your counceyll your frendes that ben trewe for Sala
mon ſaith right as the herte of a man delyteth in ſauour
that is ſwete right ſo the counceyll of trewe frendes yeuth
ſwetneſſe to the ſoule/he ſaith alſo ther may no thing be lik
nyd to a trewe frende. For certes gold ne ſiluer be not ſo
moche worth as the good will of a trewe frend And eke he
ſaith that a trewe frende is a grete defence/who that it findeth
certes he fyndeth a grete treſoure. Than ſhal ye eke vnder
ſtonde yf that your trewe frendes ben diſcrete & wyſe/for the
book ſaith/Aye alway thy counceyll of hem that ben wyſe.
And by this ſame reſon ſhal ye clepe to your counceyll of
your frendes/that ben of age whiche that haue ſeyn many
thinges and ben expert in diuerſe thinges and ben appro
ued in counceyllyng. For the book ſaith in old men is the
ſapience and in longe tyme the prudence. And Tullius
Sayth/ That grete thynges ben not ay acomplyſſhed

by ſtrengthe ne be deliuernes of body/but by counceill and
by auctorite of ꝑſones & by ſcience/the Whiche thre thinges
ne be not feble by age/but certes they enforce & encrece day
by day/And than ſhal ye kepe this for a general reble/+
First ſhal ye clepe to your counceyll a felwe of your frendes
that ben ſpecyall/For Salamon ſaith/Many a frende haue
thou/but among a thouſandy chese the one to be thy coun-
ceyllour/For al be hit ſo that thou firſt telle thy counceyll
to felwe/thou maiſt after telle thy counceyll to mo folke yf
hit be nede/But loke alway that thy counceillours haue tho
thre condicions that I haue ſaidy beforn̄/that is to ſaye that
they be trewe+ Wiſe+ and of oldy experience/And werke not
alleway in euery nede by one counceillour allone/For ſom
tyme hit behoueth to be counceylledy by many/For Sala-
mon ſaith/Saluation of thinges is there Where be many
counceyllours/Now ſith I haue told yow+ of Whiche folke
that ye ſholdy be counceilledy/Now Wil I telle Whiche coun
ceyll ye ſhal eſchewe+ First ye ſhal eſchewe the counceillyng
of foles/For Salamon ſaith take no counceyll of a fool+
For he ne can not counceylle but after his luſte and his
affection/The book ſaith that the properte of a fool is this
He trowbeth harme lightly of euery Wight/And lightly
trowbeth all bounte in hym ſelf/Ye ſhall alſo eſchewe the
counceyllyng of flaterars/ſuche as enforce hem rather to
preyſe your perſonne be flaterye/than to telle you the ſoth-
faſtnes of thinges+ Wherfore Tullius ſaith Amonge alle
the peſtelences that ben in frendeſhip/the gretteſt is flatte-
rye/And therfore hit is more nede to eſchewe and drede
flaterers than ony other peple/The book ſaith thou ſhalt

rather fle and drede the ſwete wordes of flatterers and prayſers / than the egre wordes of thy frende that ſaith to the thy ſothes. ¶ Salamon ſaith That the wordes of a flatterer / is a ſnare to cache Jnocentes / he ſaith alſo he that ſaith to his frende wordes of ſwetenes and of playſance ſetteth a nette before his feet to cache hym. ¶ And therfore ſaith Tullius Enclyne not thyn eeres to flatterers ne take no counceyll of wordes of flatterye. ¶ And Caton ſaith Auiſe the wele to eſchewe wordes of flatterye of ſwetenes and of playſaunce. ¶ And eke thou ſhalt eſchewe the counceyllyng of thyn old ennemyes that ben reconſiled. ¶ The book ſaith That no wight retorneth in to the grace of his olde ennemyes ſaufly. ¶ And yſope ſaith Ne truſte not to hem with whom thou haſt ſomtyme had werre or enemyte / ne telle not hem thy counceyll. ¶ And Seneke telleth the cauſe why it may not be and ſayth Where as a grete fyre hath longe tyme endured / that there ne dwellith ſom vapour of warmnes. ¶ And therfore ſayth Salamon / In thyn olde foo truſte thou neuer. ¶ For trewly though thyn enemy be reconſiled and maketh the chere of humylyte and lowteth to the wyth his hed / ne truſte hym neuer the more. ¶ For ſykerly he maketh that feyned humylyte more for his owen prouffyt than for the loue of thyn owen perſone. be cauſe he demeth the to haue victorye ouer his perſone be ſuche feyned countenance. ¶ The whiche victorye he myght not haue be ſtryf ne warre. ¶ Peter alfons ſaith / Make no felawſhip with thyn olde enemyes For yf thou doo / they will puerten hit to wickednes / And eke thou muſte eſchewe the counceill of ſuche that ben thy ſeruantes & beren the grete reuerence.

For paventure they say more for drede than for loue/ And therfore saith a philosopher in this wise/ Ther is no wight parfightly trewe to hym that he fore dredeth/ And Tullig saith/ther is no wight so grete as an Emperour that longe may endure but yf he haue more loue of his peple than drede Thou shalt eschewe the counceyll of folke that ben dronke/ lewe/ For they can no counceyll hyde/ For Salamon saith there is no pryuyte Where as regneth dronkenes/ Ye shal allway haue in suspect suche folk as counceyll yow one thing pryuely and counceylle yow the contrary openly. Cassiodre saith that it is a maner sleight to hyndre/ Whan a man scheweth to doo one thinge openly & werketh the contrary pryuely/ Thou shalt also haue in suspett the counceyllyng of wicked folk/ For the book saith That the counceyll of wicked folk/ For the book saith That the counceyll of wicked folk is alleway full of fraude. And dauid saith That blyssful is that man that hath not folowed the counceyll of wicked folk/ Thou shalt also eschewe the counceyl lyng of yong folk for her counceyll is not rype.

NOw sire sith I haue schewed yow all this of Whiche folk ye shal take your counceyll and of Whiche folk ye shal eschewe their counceyll/ Now Wole I telle yow how ye shal examyne your counceyll/ After the doctryne of Tullig In examynyng than of your counceyllours ye shal cõsidere many thinges/ Alder first thou shalt considere/ that in that thing that thou art purposed and vpon What thing thou shalt haue counceyll that verray trouthe be said & conserued This is to saye/ telle all trewly thy tale/ For he that saith fals/ may not well be counceylled in that caas of the Whiche he lieth/ And after this considere thre thinge that accorde

to that thou purposist ỹ First for to do by thy counceyllours
yf reson accorde therto. And eke yf thy myght may atteyne
therto. And yf the more parte & the better parte of thy coun
ceillours accorde therto or no. Than shalt thou cõsidere What
thinge shall folowe of that cõceillynge as hate. pees. warre
grace. prouffyt. or dõmage & many other thinges. And of
alle these thinges thou shalt considere of What wte is engen
dryd the mater of thy counceyll And What frupt it may
concerne & engendryn. Thou shalt considere eke alle the cau
ses from Whens they be sprongen And Whan ye haue examy
ned your counceill as I haue said & Whiche parte is the better
and more prouffytable and haue approuyd by many Wyse
folke and olde Than shalt thou considere yf thou may per
fourme hit and make of hit a good ende For reson Wolde
not that ony man shold begynne a thinge but yf he might
pfourme hit as hym oughte. ne noman sholde take on hym
so heuy a charge that he myght not bere hit For the prouerbe
saith he that to moche embracheth distreyueth litylle And
Caton saith also Assaye to do suche thinges as thou hast
power to do. on lesse that the charge oppresse the to sore. and
that the behoueth to Weyue that thynge that thou hast be
gonne. And yf that thou be in doubte Whether thou may p
forme hyt or not. Chese rather to suffre than to begynne.
and Peter alfons saith. yf thou hast might to do a thinge
Whiche thou muste repente. hit is better nay than ye. this is
to saye that hit is better to holde thy tonge stille than for to
speken. Than maist thou Vnderstonde by strenger resons
That yf thou hast power to pforme a Werke. the Whiche thou
shalt repente. than it is better that thou suffre than begynne

Syn they that defenden euery wight to assaye a thing of the whiche he is in doubte/whether he may performe it or noo And after whan ye haue examyned your counceyll as I haue saidy beforn̄ and knowe well that ye may performe your empryse/conferme hit than sadly til it be at an ende.

Now it is reson saidy she and tyme that I shelde yow whan and wherfore that ye may chaunge your counceyllours without repreef/Sothly a man may change his counceille or his purpose yf the cause cesseth or whan an other cause begynneth For the lawe vpon thinges that newly betyden behoueth newe counceyll And Seneca saith Yf that thy counceyll come to the eeris of wickedy men thyn enemyes/chaunge thy counceyll/Thou maist also chaunge thy counceyll yf so be that ther be errour or thou fynde ony other cause harme or domage maye betyde/Also yf thy counceylle be dishoneste or ellis cometh of dishoneste cause/chaunge thy counceyll For the lawe saith that alle behestes that ben dishoneste ben of no valewe/And eke yf so be that it be Impossible or may not goodly be performedy or kept/take this for a generall reule that euery counceyll that is affermedy so strongly that it may not be changedy for no condition that may betide/I saye that ilke counceyll is wickedy.

This Melibeus whan he herde the doctryne of his wif dame prudence he answerdy in this wise. Dame saidy he as yet in to this tyme ye haue couenably taught me as in general how I shall gouerne me in chesyngy and withholdyngy of my counceyllours. But nowe wolde I fayn̄ that ye woldy condescende especyall and telle me how liketh or what semeth yow be our counceyllours that we haue chosen

in our present nedes +

My lordy saidy she I beseche yow in alle humblesse that ye
Wil not Wilfully replye ayenst my reson/ne distempre
your herte though I speke thingy that you displese For godi
Woot that is not myn entente/I speke hit for your beste+
for your honour andy prouffyt eke Andy sothly I hope that
your benignite Will take it in pacience/that your counceylle
as in this caas ne sholdy not as to speke proply be callydy
a conceillyngy but a monicion or a meuyngy folye/in Whiche
counceylle ye haue erydy in thassemblyngy of your counceyl
lours For ye sholdy first haue clepedy a fewe folke to your
counceylle Andy after that ye myght haue shewedy to moo
folke yf hit hady be nede But certes ye haue sodenly clepedy
to your counceylle a grete multitude of peple ful chargeant
andy ful anoyous for to here. Also ye haue erydy for there
as ye sholde haue clepedy to your counceylle your trewe frem
des olde andy Wyse/ye haue clepedy strange folk+false andy
flatterers andy enemyes reconsiledy andy folk+that doy yow
reuerence Without loue. Andy also ye haue erydy for ye
haue brought With yow yre+couetyse & hastynes/the Whiche
thre thinges beyn contraryous to euery honest counceylle andy
prouffitable/and Whiche thre thinges ye haue not amenused
ne distroyedy neyther in your self ne in your counceyllours
as ye ought/ye haue erydy also for ye haue shewidy to your
counceyllours your talent & your affection to make Warre
anoy andy for to doo vengeance/They haue aspyedy by your
menyngy to What thingy ye be enclynedy/andy therfore haue
they counceylledy yow rather to your talente than to your
prouffit/ye haue erydy also for yow semethy that it suffiseth

yolb to haue be counceylledy be these counceyllours onky andy
with lytill avise/where as in so grete nede andy so hye/hit
hady be necessarye mo counceyllours/Andy more deliberacõy
to performe your empryse/ye haue erridy also for ye haue not
examynedy your counceyll in the forsaidy mater ne in delbe
manere as the caas requireth/ye haue erridy for ye haue made
no deuysyon betwixe your counceyllours. This is to saye
Betwene your frendes andy your feynedy counceyllours/ne
ye haue not knowe the will of your frendes olde andy wyse
But ye haue caste alle her wordes in ay huckepot/andy en-
clinedy your herte to the more part andy to the gretter nom
ber andy be yolb condescendedy/Andy also ye wote well that
men shull allway fynde a gretter parte of nombre of fooles
than of wise men. Andy therfore the counceyls that been at
congregations andy multitude of folke there as men taken
more rewardy to the nombre than to the sapience of psones
Ye see wel that in suche counceyllynges soles haue the
maistrye.

Melibeus answerdy agayny I graunte well I haue er
ridy/but there as thou hast tolde me here beforȳ that
he is not to blame that changeth his counceyll in certeyn
caas andy for certeyn Just causes/I amy al redy to chaūge
my counceyllours right as thou liste andy as thou wilt de
vyse/The prouerbe saith that for to doo symme is mannyssh
But certes for to persevere longe in symme it is a werk
of the deuyll.

Dame this sentence answerdy dame prudence andy sayde
Examyne your counceyll andy lete vs see whiche of
hem haue spokeny most resonable & taught yolb best counceill

And for as moche as the examynacion is necessarie late hs
begynne at surgiens & at phisicyens that first spekey in this
mater / I saye yow that ỹ surgyens & the phisiciens haue saidy
yow discretly as them oughte For they saide ful Wisely / that
to the office of hem hit apperteyneth to doo to euery Wight ho
nour & prouffit / & no Wight to annoye And after their craft
do grete diligence vnto the cure of hem the Whiche they haue in
gouernãce And syre right as they haue answerdy Wisely &
discretly / right so I rede yow that they be highly & souereinly
gherdonedy for her noble speche. And eke for they sholde do
the more ententy f besynes in the curacion of your doughter.
For al be it so that they be your frendes Therfore shal ye not
suffre that they shal serue yow for nought. But ye ought
to guerdone hem & shewe hem largesse. And as touchingy
that the phisicyens encresidy in this caas that is to saye that
in maladies one cõtrarie is Warisshidy by another cõtrarie I
Wolde fayn knowe how ye vnderstõde that texte & What is your
sentence / Certes saidy Melleleus I vnderstande that in this
Wise / that right as they haue do me a cõtrarious right / right
so sholde I do hem another. For right as they haue strengedy
hem on me & don me Wronge / right so sholdy I stenge me on
hem & do hem Wronge & than haue I auredy one contrarie by an
other contrarie / Lo saidy dame prudence how lightly is euery
man enclynedy to do his owen desire & his owen plaisance / cer
tes saidy she the Wordes of the phisicyens sholdy not be vnder-
stande in this Wise For certes Wickednes is not contrariosy to
Wickednes / ne strengeance to strengeance ne Wronge to Wronge
but euerych of hem encresidy & aggreggith other / But certes
the Wordes of the phisicyens sholdy be vnderstande in this Wise

For goody and Wickednes be two contrarypous/and pees and warre/vengeance and suffraunce/and discorde and accorde/and many other thinges/But certes Wickednes shal be Waressheth be goodnes/and discorde be accorde and warre be pees. and so forth be other thinges. And herto accordeth saynt Poule thapostle in many places/he saith pelde not harme to harme ne Wicked speche to Wicked speche But do Wel to hym that doth the harme and blysse hym that saith the harm̄/And in many other places he saith and amonesseth pees and accorde. But nolb Wole I speke to yolb of the counceyll Whiche that Was yeue to yolb by the men of Ialbe and Wise folke that saiden alle by one accorde as ye haue herde/that ouer alle thinges ye shold do diligence to kepe your persone and to Warnstore your holbs. And saiden also that in this caas ye oughte for to Werken ful aduysedly and With grete discretion and deliberation. And syre as to the first point that toucheth the keping of your persone ye shal vnderstande that he that hath Warre Shal euermore deuoutly and mekely beseken and prayen before alle thinges Jhesu Crist of his mercy that he Wole haue hym in his protection & be his souerayn helper at his nede. For certes in this Werke ther is no Wight that may be counceylled ne kepte sufficiently Without the keping of our lord Jhesu crist/To this entente accordeth the ppete dauid that saith/yf god ne kepe the Cyte/in ydell Waketh he that kepeth hit/Nolb syre than shul ye cõmytte the keppyng of your persone to your trelbe frendes that ben y prouedy and knolben And of them shalle ye aye helpe your persone to kepe. For Cathon saith Yf thou haue nede of helpe aye hit

of thy frende. And after this thay ſhal ye kepe yolb from
alle ſtrange folkes and fro lyers & haue alway in ſuſpect
her companye. For Peter Alfons ſaith/ Ne take no com
panye by the waye of ſtrange men/ but yf hit ſo be that thou
haue knowen hem before tyme/ and yf ſo be that ye haue not
knowen hym/ And wil nedes falle in thy companye pauen
ture Withoute thyn aſſente/ enquere thay as ſubtilly as ÿ
canſt or maiſt of his conuerſation & of his lyf before. and
fayne thy waye and ſaye that thou wilt go thyder as thou
wolt not goo/ & yf he bere a ſpere holde the on the right ſyde
And yf he bere a ſwerde holde the lyfte ſyde/ & after thus
thay ſhul ye kepe you wiſely from alle ſuche maner peple as
I haue ſaide before & hem & her conuerſacion eſchewe. And after
this thay ſhal ye kepe you in ſuche maner that for ony pre/
ſumpcon of your ſtrengthe/ that ye ne diſpyſe ne attempte
not the might of your aduerſarye/ and thus bewarre that ye
lette not the kepinge of your pſone for ony pſumpcion For
euery wiſe man dredeth his enemye. And Salamon ſaith
Wilful is he that of no thinge hath drede For certes he that
thorugh ÿ hardynes of his herte or of hym ſelf hath to grete
pſumpcion/ hym ſhal euyl betyde/ thay ſhal ye euermore coun
trewayte embuſſhementis in ſpecial. For Seneke ſaith the
wiſe man that dredeth harmes/ eſcheweth harmes/ ne he fal
leth in no peryll that peryll eſcheweth. And al be hyt ſo
that thou ſeme that thou be in ſykker place/ yet ſhalt thou do
alleway diligence in kepinge of thy perſone/ not only from
thy gretteſt enemyes but from the leſte enemye. Ouyde
ſayth That the lytyll Weſyll Wole ſle a grete bole and
the grete herte/ And the book ſayth/ That a lytyl thorn

may pryche the kynge full sore. And ay hounde will sle the wylde bore/ But natheles I saye not that thou shalt be so colbarde that thou doubte/ where as is no drede/ The book saith that som folke haue grete luste to desceyue But yet they dreden hem to be disceyued. Thou shalt drede to be enpoysoned/ And kepe the from the company of skorners. For the book saith With scorners make no companye/ but sle her wordes as venym/ Now as to the seconde poynt/ where as your wyse counceyllours counceylled yow to warnstore your hous with grete diligence I wold fayn knowe how that ye vnderstonde the wordes & what is the sentence. Melleeus answerd and sayde/ Certes I vnderstande hit in this wise that I shal warnstore my howes with colbres suche as be castellis and other maner edifices with armure and other maner artyllerye by suche thinges whiche I may my psone and my hous so defende that myn enemyes shall be in drede my hous for approche ¶

¶ To this sentence answerde anon prudence/ warnstore ryngh saidh she of grete colbres and edifices with grete costages and grete trauayll And whan that they be accomplisshid yet ben they not worth a strawe/ but yf they ben defended be trewe frendes that ben olde and wise/ And vnderstonde well that the gretteste and strengeste garyson that a ryche may may haue as wel to kepe his persone as his goody/ is that he be beloued with his subgettes & with his neyghbours. For thus saith Tullius That ther is a maner garyson that noman may vaynquisshe ne discomfyte And that is a lordy to be beloued of his Cytezeyns and of his peple. Now syr as to your thirdy poynt/ where as

your Wise & olde counceillours saide that ye ne ought not so denly ne hastely to procedey in this nede/but that ye oughteen to purueye & apparailley in this caas With grete diligence and grete deliberation trewly I trowe they saidey right Wisely and right soth ¶ For Tullius saith In euery nede er thou begynne/yet apareylle the With grete diligence/Thay sith thay in vengeance takyng inWarre in batayll and in Warnstoryng er thou begynne I rede that thou apareylle ꝑ therto and do hit With grete deliberation ¶ For Tullius sayth that longe apparayllyng before the batayll maketh short victorye And Cassiodre saith/that the garison is ꝑ strenger Whan hit is longe tyme aduysed ¶ But nowe late vs speke of the counceyll that Was accorded be your neygh/ bours suche as don yow reuerence Withouten loue/your olde enemyes reconsiled/your flatterers that counceylle yow ver/ teyn thinges openly/and pryuely counceylle yow the con/ trary ¶ The yongh folk that counceylle you to auenge you and make Warre anon ¶ Certes syre as I haue saidy before ye haue gretly entendy to haue clepedy suche maner of folk to your counceyll/Whiche counceyllours ben ynough repreuyd afore saidy by reson/ But natheles late vs nowe descende to the specyall/ye shal first procede after the doctryne of Tullius ¶ Certes the trouth of thys matere or of thys coun/ ceyll nedeth not dyligently enquyre ¶ For it is Wist Well Whyche they be that haue don to yow thys trespaas and vilonye and how many trespassours/and in What maner that they haue doo to yow alle this Wronge & alle this vilo nye And after this shal ye examyne the secondy condicon Whiche that the same Tullius adeth in this same matr.

For Tullius putteth a thinge / Whiche that he calleth con
sentinge This is to saye / Who ben they and Whiche ben they
& holde many consenten̄ to this counceyll in thy Wilfulnes
to doo hasty Vengeance And leet considere also Who be they
and holde many be they that consenteden to your aduersaries
And certes as to the first point it is wel knowen Whiche
folke they be that consenteden to your hasty Wilfulnes For
certes alle tho that counceylleden you to make sodeyn warre
be not youre frendes Lete vs nowe considere Whiche be they
that ye holden so gretly your frendes as to your persone For
al be hit so that ye be so myghty and riche Certes ye be but
allone . For ye haue no childe but a doughter / Ne ye haue
no brethren̄ ne cosyns germans ne none other nyghe kyn /
rede / Wherfore that your enemyes for drede sholden stynte to
plete With yowe or destroyen your pson / Ye knowe also that
your ryches muste be dispended in dyuerse parties / And
When that euery Wight hath his parte they ne Wil take but
lityl rewarde to vengen your deth But youre enemyes ben
thre and they haue many children . brethren̄ Cosyns and
other nyghe kynrede . And though so Were that thou had /
dest slayn two or thre of hem / yet dWellen there ynough to
Wreken her deth and to sle thy persone And though so
be that your kynrede be more syker and stedfast than the
kynrede of your aduersaries / yet natheles your kynrede nys
but after kynrede / they be but lityl subget to you And the
kynrede of your enemyes ben nygh sibbe to hem And cer /
tes as in that her condition is better than yours . Than
leet vs considere also yf that the counceyll of hem that coun
ceylle yowe to take sodeyn vengeance Whether hit accorde to

reſon or no/and certes ye knolde wel nay For as by right
or reſon ther may noman take vengeance on no wight but
the Jugge that hath ỹ Juriſdiction of hit/whan hit is gran
ted hym to take that vengeance haſtely or tempatly as the
lawe requireth And yet more ouer of that word that Tul
lius ſaith & clepeth conſentyng/thou ſhalt conſidere yf thy
myght & thy power may conſente & ſuffyſe to thy wilfulnes
& to thy counceillours And certes thou maiſt wel ſaye nay
For ſikerly as for to ſpeke properly we may do no thing
but only ſuche thynges as we may do ryghtfully. And
certes thou maiſt rightfully take no vengeance/as of your
propre auctorite. Than maye ye ſee that your power ne con
ſenteth ne accordeth your wyfullnes / Lete vs exampne
the thirde point that Tullius clepeth conſequent/thou ſhalt
vnderſtande that the vengeance that thou purpoſeſt to take
is conſequent. And therof followeth another vengeance
peryll and warre and other dõmages without nombre. of
whiche we be not ware as at this tyme. and as touching
the fourth parte that / Tullius clepeth engendryng/Thou
ſhalt conſydere that thys wronge whiche is doy to the/is
engendryd of the hate of thyn enemyes & of vengeance ta
kyng vpon hym that wole engendre another vengeance and
moche ſorowe & waſtyng of ryches as J ſaid before. Nowe
ſyre as to the fyfthe point. whiche that Tullio clepeth/cau
ſes/whiche is the laſt point/Thou ſhalt vnderſtande that
alle wronge that thou haſt receyuyd hath certeyn cauſes
whiche that clerkes clepen. oriens and efficiens and cauſa
longinqua & cauſa propinqua/this is to ſaye the fer cauſe & the

nyghe cause/The fer cause is almyghey god that is cause of alle thynges/The neer cause is thy thre enemyes/The cause accidental Was hate/The cause material Js the. v. Woundes of thy doughter/The cause formal is the cause of her Worchyng that broughten ladders and clomben in at the Wyndowes/The cause fynall Was to sle thy dnghter hit lettedy not in as moche as in hem Was/But for to speke of this fynal cause as to What ende they shal come/or What shal fynally betyde of hem in this caas/ne can J not deme But by conjectyng and supposyng/For We shal suppose that they shal come to a Wickedy ende/be cause that the book of the decrees sayth/ Selde or With grete peyne be causes brought to a goody ende/Whan they be badly begonne/Nolde syre yf men Wolde aye me Why that god suffreth men to do this Vilonye/Certes J can not Wel answere as for no sothfastnes. For thapostle saith/That the science and the Jugementes of our lordy god almighty been full depe Ther may no man comprehende ne serche hem sufficiently/Nathelès by certayn psumptions and conjectyng J holde and bileue That Wight that is ful of Justice and rightfulnes hath suffrid this to betyde be Juste cause and resonable. Thy name is Melibe/This is to saye a man that drynketh hony/thou hast dronken so moche hony of swete temporel ryches & delices of honour of this Worldy that thou art dronke and hast forgoten Jhesu crist thy creatour/Thou ne hast doy to hym suche honour & reuerence as thou oughtest/ne thou ne hast Wel taken kepe of the Wordes of Ouyde that saith Vnder the hony of the goodes of the body is hidy venym that sleeth the soule/And Salamon saith Yf thou hast founde

hony/ete of hit that ſuffyſeth. For yf thou ete of hit out of meſure/thou ſhalt ſpewe/and be nedy and poure And parauenture Criſt hath the in diſpyte/and hath tornedy away fro the his face and his miſericorde And alſo he hath ſuffrydy that thou haſt be punyſſhidy in the maner that thou haſt treſpaſſedy/Thou haſt don ſynne agayn our lordy Jheſu criſt. For certes the thre enemyes of mankynde that is to ſaye the fleſſh the fende and the Worldy thou haſt ſuffrydy hem for to entre in to thy herte Wilfully by the Wyndowes of thy body. And haſt not defendedy thy ſelf ſufficyently agaynſt her aſſaultes and her temptacions/ſo that they haue Woundedy thy ſoule in fyue places this is to ſaye/the dedely ſynnes that ben entridy in to thy herte be thy fyue Wyttes. And in thys maner our lordy Jheſu Criſt hath ſuffrydy that thy thre enmyes ben entrydy in to thy hous by the Wyndowes. And haue Woundedy thy doughter in the maner aforeſaidy.

CErtes ſaidy Melleke J ſee Well that ye enforce yow mykyl by Wordes to ouercome me in ſuche maner as J ſchal not wenge me of myn enemyes Sle Wyngy me the perill & the euyll that myght befalle of this wengeance/But Who ſo Woldy conſidere in alle wengeances the peryll & the euyll that might ſelde of wengeance takyngy/a man Woldy neuer take wengeance/& that were harme/for by wengeance takingy ben Wickedy men diſſeuerdy from the goody men And they that haue Wil to do Wickednes reſtreyne her Wickedy purpos Whan they ſee the punyſſhyngy & the chaſtyſingy of the treſpaſſours. And yet ſaye J more/that right as by ſinguler ꝑſumpcion he ſymeth in takingy wengeance of another man

Right so symeth the Juge yf he take not and do vengeance
on hem that hit haue deseruyd. Seneke saith thus/That
maister he saith is goody that repreuyd shrewis And cas
siodre sayth a may dredeth to doo outragiously Whan he
woot & knoweth that it displeseth the Juges & souerayns
And another saith The Juge that dredeth to do right ma
keth shrewes. And saint Poule thapostle saith how he wri
teth to the romayns that the Juges bere not the spere with
oute cause But they bere hit to punysshe the shrewes and
mysdoers/And for to defenden the goody men/yf ye wole
take vengeance on your enemyes ye shal retorne and haue
your corns to the Juge that hath the Jurisdiction vpon hem
and ye shall punysshe hem as the lawe axeth & requyreth
A saidy Melleke this vengeance liketh me nothing I
lethinke me nowh and take hede how that fortune hath
norysshid me fro my childhode and holpe me to passe many
a straunge paas/Now wole I assaye in her trowbyng with
godes helpe that shal me saue for to venge/Certes saydy
Prudence yf ye will werke be my counceyll ye shal not as
saye fortune by no waye/ne ye shal not lene ne bowe vnto
her after the worde of seneke/For thinges that ben folily
don and that be don in hope of fortune shal neuer come to
goody ende/And as to the same seneke saith the more clere
and the more shynyng that fortune is/the more brotyl &
the sonner broken she is/Truste ye not in her For ther nys
no stedfastnes ne stablenes in her For whan thou trowest
to be most sure and syker of her/she wil faylle & deceyue the
And where as ye sayn that fortune hath norisshid you in
your chyldhode/I saye that ther is so mykyll the lasse truste

in your wytte + For Seneke saith What may that is norisshed by fortune she maketh hym a fool/Now sith ye desiren ye aye vengeance/And the vengeance that is doy after the falle ye before the Juge liketh not yow/And the vengeance that is doy in hope of fortune is perylous ye vncerteyne/than haue ye no remedye but for to haue your recours vnto the souerayn Juge that vengeth alle vilonyes ye wronges And he shal venge yow after that hym self witnesseth Where as he sayth/leue ye the vengeance vnto me and I shal do hit +

Melebe answerdy yf I venge me not of the vilonnye that men haue doy vnto me I somone and warne hem that haue doy to me this vilonye and alle other to do me vilonye/ For it is wreton yf thou takest noo vengeance of ay olde vilonye/thou somonest thyn aduersarye to doo the a newe vilonye Also for my sufferaunce men wold do me so grete vilonye that I myght not bere hit ne susteyne hit/ye than sholdy I be put and holde ouer lowe + For men sayn in mykyl suffrynge shal many thinges falle vnto the Whiche thou ne shal nowe suffre +

Certes saidy dame prudence I graunte yow wel that ouer moche sufferaunce is not goody/But yet hit folweth not therof that euery psone to whom men do vilonye to take of hit vengeance For that appertayneth ye longeth al onely to the Juges + For they shal venge the vilonyes ye the Iniurves/And therfore the two auctoritees that ye haue saidy to fore ben alonely vnderstonde in ỹ Juges For whan ye suffre ouer many wronges ye vilanyes to be doy without punyssshinge they semen not a man to do only newe wronges/but they cõmanden hym ye bidden hym to do syme.

Andy the ſouerayns & the Juges in their contre ſo mykyl
ſuffre of the ſhrewes & myſdoers, that they ſhulde by ſuche
ſuffraunce andy by proces of tyme wexen of ſuche power &
myght that they ſhulde put out the Juges & the ſouerayns
from their places, andy at laſte to make hem to leſe her lord
ſhips But lete vs nowe put that, that ye haue leue to venge
I ſaye ye be not of myght ne power as nowe to venge yowe
For yf ye wil make compariſon vnto the myght of your
aduerſaryes, ye ſhal fynde in many thynges that I haue
ſhewdy yowe or this, that her condition is better than youres
Andy therfore ſay I that it is goody as nowe that ye ſuffre
andy be pacyent. Furthermore ye knowe well that after
the comen ſawe, hit is a wodenes to a man to ſtryue with
a more mighty man than he is hym ſelf Andy for to ſtryue
with a man of euen ſtrengthe, that is to ſaye with a man
that is as ſtrongy as hym ſelf, hit is grete peryll. Andy
for to ſtryue with a weyker than hym, hit is folye. Andy
therfore ſholdy a man fle ſtryuyngy as mykyl as he myghte.
For Salamon ſaith Hit is a grete worſhip to a man to
kepe hym fro noyſe andy ſtryf Andy yf ſo happe that a man
of gretter myght andy ſtrengthe than thou arte do the gre
uance, Studye andy beſye the ratter to ſtynte the ſame gre
uance, than for to venge For ſeneke ſaith That he putteth
hym in grete peryll that ſtrydeth with a gretter man than
he is hym ſelf. Andy Cathon ſaith That yf a man of hyer
eſtate or degre or of more might than thou art do the anoye
or greuance ſuffre hym, For he that ones hath greuydy the
maye another tyme releue the andy helpe the, yet ſet I caas
that ye haue a licence for to venge yowe, yet ought ye to take

here to all these thinges aforesaidy er that ye take vengeance
For I saye that ther be ful many thinges that shal restrayn
yow of vengeance takyngy & make yow for tenclyne to suf
fre & to haue pacience in the wronges that haue be don. First
andy forwardy & yf ye wil considre the defawtes that be in
your owen psone. For whiche defawtes gody hath suffredy
yow to haue alle thys tribulation as I haue saidy before to
yow. For the Poete saith/That we oughteny paciently to
take the tribulations that comen to vs/whan we thinke &
considere that we haue deseruidy to haue them. Andy saynt
Gregory saith/that whan a man considereth well the nom
bre of his defautes & symnes/the paynes & tribulations that
he suffreth semeth the lasse to hym Andy in as moche as hym
thinketh his symnes more heuy andy greuous in so moche
semeth his peyne more lighter andy esyer to hym/Also ye
oughteny tenclyne & bowe your herte to take the pacyence of
our lordy Jhesu Crist as saith saynt Peter in his epistlis
Jhesu Crist he saith that suffreth for vs & yaf ensample to
euery may to folowe andy sue hym/for he dide neuer symne
Ne neuer cam ther out of his mouth vileyns wordy/whan
meny cursedy hym/he cursedy hem not/Andy whan meny beten
hym/he manassedy hem not. Also the grete pacyence that
sayntes whiche that ben in paradyse haue hady in tribulati;
ons that they haue suffrydy wythouteny her deserte or gylt
ought moche stire your pacience Forye shoidy enforce yow to
haue pacience/Considerynge the tribulations of this worldy
but litel while endureth andy sone passydy & gooy/Andy
the Joye that a may seketh by pacyence in trybulacions is
perdurable/After that the Apocalips saith in his epistle.

The Joye of goon he ſaith is ꝑdurable that is to ſaye euer ꝰ laſtyng Alſo trowe ye wel and eke beleue ſtedfaſtly that he is not wel norysſhed ne well taught that will not haue pacience ne wil not receyue pacience. For Salamon ſaith That the doctryne of a man and the witte is knowen be pa cience And in another place he ſaith that he that is pacient gouerneth hym by grete prudence. & the ſame ſalamon ſaith The angry and the wrathful man maketh noyſes And the pacient man attempreth hym and ſtilleth hym / he ſaith alſo / hit is more worth to be pacyent than for to be ryght ſtrong / And he that may haue the lordſhip of his owen herte is more to preyſe / than by his force or ſtrengthe taketh grete cytees And therfore ſaith ſaynt Jame in his epiſtle That pacience is a grete vertue of perfection. Certes ſaid Melibe J graunte dame prudence that pacience is a grete vertu of ꝑfection but euery man may not haue the perfection that ye ſeke / ne J am none of that nombre of right parfight men For my herte may neuer be in pees vnto the tyme that hit be venged And al be hit ſo that hit was grete paryll to myn enemyes to doo me a vilonye in takyng vengeance vpon me Yet toke they no hede of the paryll but fulfylled their wicked will and corage / And therfore me thinketh men ought not to repreue me / though J put me in a lityll paryll for to venge me / And though J doo a grete exceſſe That is to ſaye that J a venge one outrage by another.

Said dame Prudence ye ſaye your wil as you liketh But in no caas of the world a man ſholde not do outrage ne exceſſe for to venge hym For caſſiodre ſaith that as euyl doth he that auengeth hym by outrage as he that

with the outrage And therfore ye shal venge yow after the
ordre of right/that is to saye by the lawe/and not by excesse
ne by outrage And also yf ye wille venge you of the oul-
trage of your aduersaryes in other maner/ye synne/And
therfore saith Senek/that a man shal neuer venge shrewd-
nes by shrewdnes/and yf that ye saye that right axeth a
man to defende violence by violence and fightyng by figh
tyng/Certes ye saye soth. Whan the defence is don anon
Withouten intervalle or Withouten taryeng or delaye for to
defende hym and not forto venge hym. And yet behoueth
that a man put suche temperance in hys defence that men
haue no cause ne matere to reproche hym that defendeth hym
of oultrage or of excesse. For ellys were it agayn reson.
Parde ye knowe Well that ye make no defence as now for
to defende yow/but for to venge yow/and so fareth it that
ye haue no Wille to do your Wille attemperatly. And ther-
fore me thynketh that pacyence is good. For Salamon
sayth/That he that is not pacyent shal haue grete harm.
CErtes saidy Melebe I graunte yow that Whan a man
is impacient and Wroth of that Whiche toucheth hym
not/& that appertayneth not to hym/though hit harme hym
it is no Wonder For the lawe saith that he is culpable that
entermeteth or medleth of thyngy that appertayneth not
to hym. And Salamon sayth That he that enterme-
teth hym of the noyse of stryf of another man/is lyke to
hym that taketh a strange houndy by the eerys. For right
as he that taketh a strange hounde by the eerys/he is other-
Whyle bytey Wyth the houndy/ryght in the same Wyse/it is
reson that he haue harme that by hys Impacyence medlyth

hym of the noyse of another man Where as hit appertaynyth
not to hym But ye knowe well that this dede that is to
saye my grief and my desire toucheth me right nygh/and
therfore though I be wroth and impacient it is no meruayll
And sauyng your grace I can not see that I shold gretly
harme me though I toke vengeance/ For I am richer and
more mighty than myn enemyes ben & it is wel knowen that
by money and hauyng grete possessions ben al thinges of
this worldy gouerned. And also salamon saith that alle
thise thinges obeyen to moneye. What prudence hadi herde
her husbonde avaunte hym of his ryches & of his moneye
dispreysyng the power of his enemyes she spack and saidi
in this wise/Certes dere syre I graunte you that ye be riche
and myghty/and that riches ben goody to hym that haue
goten hem well and that wel can vse them/ For right as
the body of a man may not lyue without the soule/nomore
may the lyf without temporel goodes And by richesse may
a man gete hym grete frendes/And therfore saith pamphi
les yf an erles doughter be riche he saith she may chese of a
thousandy men whom she wil take to her husbonde. For of
a thousandy men one wil not forsake her And this pam
philes saith also yf that thou be right happy that is to saye
yf thou be riche thou shalt fynde a grete nombre of felaws
and frendes. and yf thy fortune change farewel frendship
and felawship for thou shalt be allone without ony com
panye/but yf hit be the companye of poure folk. And yet
saith this pamphiles more ouer/that they that ben bonde &
thral of lignage shuld be made worthy & noble by richesse.
And right so as by richesse ther comen many goodes/right

so by pouerte ther comen many harmes & anyes And ther fore clepeth cassiodre pouerte the moder of ruyne/that is to saye the moder of ouerthrowyng or of fallyng doun And therfore saith Peter alfons/one of the gretteste aduersitees of thys World is Whan a freman of kynde or of birthe is constreyned be pouerte to ete the almesse of hys enemye. And the same saith Jmocence in one of his bookes that sorowfull and myshappy is the condition of a poure beggar For yf he aye not his mete/he dyeth for hunger. And yf he aye he dieth for shame/and algate necessite constreyneth hym to aye. And therfore saith Salamon That better it is to dye than to haue suche pouerte. And as the same salamon saith better it is to dye a bitter deth than to lyue suche a lyf/Be thyse resons that J haue said Vnto you and by many other that J coude say J graunte that richesse ben goody to hem that gete hem well & to tho that vse well this richesse And therfore Wole J shewe yow/how ye shal behaue yow in gadryng of your richesse/and in What maner ye shal vse them First ye shal gete hem Without grete desyre/by goody leyzer sokyngly and not ouer hastely. For a man that is to desiring in getyng riches haboundeth hym first to theefte and to alle other myschebles And therfore saith salamon he that hasteth hym to resily to Wexe ryche he shal be none Jmocent/he saith also that the ryches that hastely cometh to a man/soone and hastely goth and passeth from a man But that riches that cometh lityll & a lityll Wexeth alway and multeplieth And therfore ye shal gete riches by your Witte and by your trauayll Vnto your prouffit/and that Without ony Wronge & harme doyng to ony other pson.

For the lawe saith ther maketh noman hym self ryche yf he do harme to another wight, this is to saye that nature defendeth and forbedeth by right that no man make hym ryche vnto the harme of an other persone. And Tullius saith that no sorowe ne drede of deth ne of thing that may befalle vnto man is so moche agayn nature as a man to encreece his owen prouffit to the harm of an other man. and though that grete & myghty men gete riches more lightly than thou, yet shalt thou not be ydle But shewe to do thy prouffyt, For thou shalt in alle wise fle ydlenes. For salamon saith That he that trauaylleth in ydlenes techeth a man to do many euyllys And the same Salamon saith He that traueilleth and besieth hym to tyle his lond shal ete brede. and he that is ydle & casteth hym to no besynes ne occupation shal falle in to pouerte and dye for hunger. And he that is ydle and slowe can neuer fynde conuenable tyme for to do his prouffyt For ther is a versifyer saith. That the ydle man excuseth hym in Wynter be cause of the grete colde and in somer by encheson of hete, For these causes saith Cathon Waketh and enclineth yow. not ouer myche to slepe, For ouermoche reste norissheth and causeth many vices. And therfore saith saynt Jerome, doth some good dedes that the deuyll Whiche that is your enemye fynde you not vnoccupyed. For the deuyll taketh not lightly to his Worchinge suche as he fyndeth occupied in good Werke Than thus in getynge of ryches ye muste fle ydlenes. and afterward ye shall vsen the ryches Whiche ye haue goten by your Witte and by your trauayll in suche maner that men holde yow not to scarse ne to sparynge ne to fole large

that is to saye ouer large a spendar + For ryght as men blame an auerycyous man be cause of his scarsenes and chyncherye / in the same wyse is he to blame that spendeth ouer largely + And therfore Caton saith vse thy riches that thou hast goten in suche maner as men haue no ma= tere ne cause to saye ne calle the neyther wreche ne chynche For it is a grete shame to a man to haue a poure herte and a riche purs He sayth also the goodes that thou hast goten vse hem be mesure that is to saye spende them mesurably + For they that folily spenden and wasten the goodes that they haue / whan they haue nomore propre of theyr owen / they shapen hem to take the goodes of other men + I saye than that ye shal flee auarycr vsyng your riches in suche ma= nere that men saye not that your ryches is deuouredy / but that ye haue hem in your myght and in your weldyng + For the wise man reproueyth the auarycious man and saith thus in two versis Wherto and why buryeth a man his owen goodes be his grete auarycr and knoweth wel that nedes muste he dye + For deth is the ende of euery man as in thys present lyf + And for what cause and encheson Joyneth or knyttetb he hym so faste to hys goodes / that alle his wyttes nowe not dysseuere ne departe hym from his goodis + And knoweth wel or ought to knowe that whan he is dede / he shal nothyng bere wyth hym out of this worldy + And therfore sayth seynt Augustyn + that the auerycyous man is lykenyd vnto helle / that the more hit swalowetb the more it desireth to swolowe and to de= uoure / And as wel as ye woldy eschewe to be calledy an auaricyous man or a chynche / as wel shoIdy ye kepe you

and gouerne yow in ſuche wiſe that men clepe yow not ſole large. Therfore ſaith Tullius/The goodes of thyn hous ne ſholdy not be hid ne kept ſo cloos but that they myght be opendy be pyte and be debonairte/that is to ſaye to yeue hem parte that haue grete nede. Ne thy goodes ſholdy not be ſo opey to be euery mannes goodes/Afterwardy in getyngy of your richeſſe and vſyngy hem ye ſhall alway haue thre thinges in your herte. That is to ſaye our lordy gody. goody cõſcience. and goody name. Firſt ye ſhal haue gody in your herte. and for no riches ye ſhal do no thingy whiche may in ony maner wiſe diſpleſe gody that is our creatour & maker After the worde of ſalamon/hit is better to haue a litil good with the loue of gody than for to haue moche goldy & treſour and to leſe the loue of his lordy gody. And the prophete ſaith that better it is to be a goody may & haue litil goody and treſour/than to beholdey a ſhrewe & haue grete richeſſe And yet ſaye I furthermore that ye ſhal alway do youre beſynes to gete you riches ſo that ye gete hem with goody conſcience. And the appoſtle ſaith that ther nys no thingy in this worldy of whiche we ſhal haue ſo grete Joye as whan our conſcience berith vs goody witnes And the wiſe may ſaith that the ſubſtance of a may is ful goody whan ſynne is not in mannes conſcience. Afterwardy in getyngy of your rycheſſe and in vſyngy of them ye muſte haue grete beſynes and diligence that your goody name be alway kept and conſerued. For Salamon ſaith That better is and more it availleth a may for to haue a goody name than for to haue many riches. And therfore he ſaith in an other place/do grete diligence in kepyngy of thy frende and in

kepyng of thy goody name For hit shal lenger abide With the than ony other tresour be it neuer so precyous. And certes he sholdy not be calledy a gentylman that after godz & goody conscience alle thinges lefte ne doth to kepe his goody name. And cassiodre saith that it is signe of a gentil herte When a man louethy & desireth to haue a goody name. And therfore saith saynt Augustyn/that ther be two thinges þ be necessarye & nedefull/that is goody conscience & goody loos And he that trusteth hym so mikyl in his goody conscience that he despiseth & setteth at nought his goody name or loos he doth not Wel/ For he that reklieth not to kepe his goody name nys but a cruel chorle/Syre nolle haue I shewedy yolle holle ye sholdy doo in getingy of richesse & holle ye sholdy vse hem And I see Wel that for the trust that ye haue in your riches ye Wole meue Warre & bataille I counceille yolle that ye begynne no Warre in truste of your riches For they suffise not Warres to maintene. And therfore saith a philosophre/that man that desireth algate & Wille haue Warre shal neuer haue suffysaunce. For the richer that he is the gretter dispense muste he make yf he Wil haue Worshipe & victorye. And salamon saith That the gretter riches that a man hath the more dispence he hath. And therfore al be hit so that he fortune & riches ye may haue many folke/yet behoueth it not ne it is not goody to begynne Warre/ Where that ye may haue in other maner pees vnto your Worshipe and prouffyt. For the victoryes that bey of bataille in this Worlde/bey not in grete nombre and multitude of peple ne in certu of man/but hit lyeth in the Wylle and in the honde of our lordy Jhesu godz al-mighty. And therfore Judas machabeus Whiche that Was

godes knyght. Whan he shold fight agaynst his aduersa
ryes that had a gretter nombre and gretter multitude of
peple and strenger than was the peple of Machabee/yet he
recomforted his litel peple and said right in this wyse
Also lightly said he may our lord god yeue victorye to
a fewe folk as to many folke/ For the victory of a bataille
cometh not by a grete nombre of peple but hit cometh from
our lord god of heuen And dere sire for as moche as ther
is noman certayn that he be worthy that god wole yeue hym
victory or not. Salamon saith/ Therfore euery man shold
gretly drede warris to begynne and be cause that in bataille
falle many paryls And happeth otherwhile that also soone
is a grete man slayn as a litil man. And as is wreton
in the seconde book of kynges/the dedes of bataille ben aven
turous and no thing certayn/ For as lightly is one hurte
with a spere as an other/And for ther is grete paryll in
warre therfore shold a man eschewe and flee warre in as
mykyll as a man may goodly. For Salamon sayth He
that louyth paryll shal falle in paryll. After that dame
prudence had spaken in this mater Melleelee answerd and
sayde I see wel dame prudence that by fair wordes and by
your resons that ye haue shewed me/that warre liketh you
no thyng/but I haue not herde yet in this counceyll/how I
shal do in this nede. Certes said she I counceylle yow that
ye accorde with your aduersaryes that ye haue pees with hem
For saynt Jame saith in his epistlis That by accorde and
pees the smale riches weye grete And by debate & discorde
the grete richesse falleth doun and faillen/And ye knowe
well that one of the gretteste and most soueravn thyng

that is in this Worlde is vnyte and pees . And therfore
saith our lordy Jhesu Crist to his apostlis in this wise Wel
happy and blessydy be tho that louen and purchacen pees .
For they be calledy chyldren of gody . A saydy Melleke
nolle see I Wel that ye loue not myn honour ne my Worship
Ye knolleny that myn aduersaryes haue begonne this debate
And ye see Wel that they ne requyre ne praye me of pees
ne they aye not to be reconsyledy Wolde ye than that I goo
and meke me and obeye me vnto hem and crye hem mercy
Forsothe that were not my Worship . For right as men
sayn ouergrete humblenes engendryth grete dispreysyngy
so sholdy it fare by me in doyngy this grete humylite or me
kenes . Than began prudence to make semblaunt of Wrath
and saidy syre saue your grace / I loue your honour and
your prouffight as I do myn olleny and euer haue doo / ney-
ther ye ne none other salle neuer the contrarye / And yet
yf I hady saydy that ye shuldy haue purchacedy your pees
and the reconsilyation I ne hady mykyll myskapedy ne
saidy amys . For the Wise may saith / the dissention begyn
neth by another may / And the reconsilyngy be hym self
begymmeth / And the prophete saith Fle shrelldnes and
do goodnes seke pees & fololle hit in as mikyl as in the is
Yet saye I not that ye shal rather pursiellle to your aduer-
saryes for pees / than they shal to yolle . For I knolle Welle
ynough that ye be so harde of herte that ye Wil do no thingy
for me . And Salamony saith that he that hath ouer harde
ay herte he at leste shal mishappe & mistyde . Whan Melleke
hady herde dame prudence make semblaunt of Wrath he saidy
in this Wise / Dame I pray yolle that ye be not displesidy of

thinges that I saye. ¶ For ye knowe well that I am angry
and wroth and that is no wonder. And they that ben
wroth wote not well what they don ne what they sayn.
¶ Wherfore the prophete saith that troubled eyen haue no cleer
sight, but saye ye and counceylle me as you goody liketh
For I am redy to doo right as ye will desire. And yf ye
will repreue me of my folye I am the more holden to loue
you & to preyse yow. For salamon saith, He that repreueth
hym that doth folye he shal fynde gretter grace than he that
disseyueth hym with swete wordes. ¶ Than saidy dame pru
dence I make no semblant of wrath ne of anger but for
your prouffit. For Salamon saith He is more wroth that
repreuyth or chydeth a fool for his folye shewyng hym sem
blant of wrath than he that supporteth hym and preyseth
hym in his mysdoyng and lawith at his folye. And this
same Salamon saith afterwardy that by the sorowfull vi
sage of a man that is to saye by the sory and the heuy con
tenance of a man the sole correcteth hym self and amendeth
Than saidy Melebee I shal not on answere you vnto so
many fair resons as ye haue put to me and shewdy. Saye
ye shortly your will and your counceylle and I am redy
to performe & fulfylle it. Than dame Prudence discouerdy
alle her will vnto hym and saide, I counceylle you aboue
alle thingy that ye make pees betwene gody and you, and
be ye reconsiledy vnto hym and to his grace, For as I haue
said before God haue suffridy yow to haue al this tribula
tion and disese for your synnes And yf ye do as ye saye
yow, gody wil sende your aduersaryes vnto you and make
hem falle at your feet, redy to do your will and your

commandementes ¶ For Salamon saith / Whan the condi-
tion of a man is plesaunt & lykyng to god / he changeth
the hertes of the mannys aduersaryes and constreyneth hem
to beseke hym of pees and of grace And I pray yow lete
me speke with your aduersaryes pryuely . For they shal
not knowe that it be your wille or your assente and than
Whan I knowe her wille and her entente I may counceylle
you the more selwrly . Dame sayd Melleb do your wille
and your likyng for I put me only in youre disposition
and ordenance ¶

Than Whan dame prudence salwe the goody wille of her
husbonde delyberyd and toke aduys in her self / thin-
kyng how she myght bryngе this nede to a good conclu-
sion and to a good ende . And Whan she salwe her tyme
she sente for thyse aduersaryes to come to her in to a preuy
place / and shewde wisely vnto hem the grete goodnes that
come of pees and the grete harmes and pareylls that ben
in warre & sayd to hem in a goodly maner / how that they
oughten to haue grete repentaūce of the iniurye & wrong
that they had don to Melleb her lord vnto her and her
doughter .

And Whan they herde ỳ wordes of dame prudence they were
so enspired & rauysshed & had so grete ioye of her that
wonder was to telle / A lady sayd they ye haue shewid vnto
vs the blessyng of swetenes after the salwe of dauid the
prophete for the reconsilyng / whiche that we be not worthy
to haue in no manere / but we oughten to requyre it with
grete contrition & humylite / that ye of your grete goodnes
haue presented vnto vs / Now se we wel that the scyence

and the commyng of Salamon is ful trelbe he ſaith that
ſwete wordes multiplye and encreen frendes and make
ſhrelbes to be debonayr and meke/Certes ſaid they we put
alle our dede and al our mater and cauſe/hoolly in your
good wille. And be redy to obeye to the comandement of
my lord Melleke And dere and benigne lady we pray you
and beſeche yolb as mekely as we can that it like vnto
your grete goodnes to fulfillen in dede your wordes goodly
For we conſideren and knolbleche that we haue offended
and greuyd my lord Melleke out of meſure ſo ferforth
that we be not of polber to make hym amendes And ther
fore we obligen vs and bynde vs and our frendes for to
done al his wille and cõmandementes/But pauenture he
hath ſuche anger and ſuche wrath to vs ward be cauſe
of our offence/that he wole emone vs ſuche peyne that we
may not bere hit ne ſuſteyne hit/And therfore noble lady
we beſeche your noble pite to take ſuche auiſement in this
nede that we ne our frendes be not diſherited & deſtroyed
thurgh our folye.

Certes ſaid dame prudence it is an hard thing and
right perilous that a man put hym ſelf al vtterly
in arbitration and Jugement and in the myght & polber
of his enemye. For Salamon ſaith Beleue me and yeue
credence to that I ſhal ſaye/ne yeue neuer the polber ne gouer
nance of thy goodes. to thy ſone. to thy wyf. to thy frende ne
to thy broder/ne yeue thou myght ne maiſtrye ouer thy body
whileſt thou lyueſt/Nolb ſith that he defendeth that a man
ſhoold not yeue to his broder ne to his frende the myght of
his body by a ſtrenger reſon he defendeth a man to yeue hym

to his enemye. And nathéles I counceyll yoll that ye myll
truſt not my lozdy. Foz I wote wel & knolwe verily that
he is debonayr. meke. large and curteys and no thing
deſirous ne couetous of goody ne ryches. Foz ther nys no
thing in thys world that he deſireth more than worſhip
and honour. Furthermore I knolwe and am ful ſure that
he ſhal no thing do in thys dede wyth oute my counceyll.
And I ſhal ſo werke in this caas that by the grace of our
lozdy godz ye ſhal be reconſiled vnto hs/ Than ſaidz they
With one voys/ Worſhipfull lady We put hs & our goodes
in your wille and diſpoſition al fully And be redy foz to
come What day that it lyke to your nobleſſe to aſſigne hs
foz to make our obligations and bondes alſo ſtronge as
it ſhal like vnto your goodnes that We molwe fulfylle the
wyll of yoll and my lozdy Melleke. Whan dame prudence
had herdz thanſwers of theſe menz/ She had hem retorne a
gayn pryuely. And ſhe retornedz agayn to her lozdy Mel
leke and tolde hym holw ſhe fonde his aduerſaryes ful repen
tant/ knolwlechyng ful lolwly her ſymnes and treſpaas.
And holw that they were redy to ſuffre al peyne requyring
hym of mercy and pyte / Than ſaydz Melleke he is wel
Worthy to haue pardon and forzyeuenes that excuſeth hym
not of hys ſynne But knolwlecheth and repenteth hym
ayeyng indulgence foz his ſynne. Seneke ſaith/ Ther is
the remiſſion & forzyeuenes/ Foz the confeſſion is neygh-
bour to Jnocence/ And therfore I aſſente and conformé
me to haue pees/ but it is goody that We do not Without
the Wille of our frendes.

Than was prudence ryght glady and ioyefull and
saidy certes syre ye haue wel and goodly answerdy
For ryght as by the counceyll assente and helpe of your
frendes ye haue styredy to do venge you and make warre.
ryght so with outen her counceyll shal ye not accorde you
ne haue pees with your aduersaryes / For the lalbe saith
Ther is no thingy so goody le wey of kynde as a thingy to
le vnbounde le hym that it was bounde / And than dame
prudence without delaye or taryengy sente anon her messa
gers for her kyn and her oldy frendes whiche were trelbe &
wise / And told hem le ordre in presence of Melleke all this
mater as is aboue expressidy and declaredy. And praydy
hem that they woldy saye her aduyse. and counceylle what
were best to do in this nede. And whan Melleebes frendes
hady herde this nede and takey her aduyse and deliberation
of the forsaidy mater and hady examynedy by grete besynes
and grete counceyll / they yaf ful counceyll for to haue pees
and reste / And that Melleke sholdy receyue with goody
herte his aduersaryes to forgyuenes & mercy. And whan
dame prudence hady herdy thassent of her lordy Melleke and
of his frendes she was wonderly glady in her herte & saide
Ther is a noble prouerbe that saith / the goodnes that thou
maist do this day do hit / and abyde not ne delaye it not til
to morwe And therfore I counceyll that ye sende your mes
sagers suche as le discrete and wise vnto your aduersaries
Tellyngy hem on your behalf that yf they wil trete of pees
and of accorde / that they shape hem without delaye or tary
engy to come vnto vs / whiche thingy performedy was in
dede And whan these trespassours and repentyngy folke

of her folies that is to saye the aduersaryes of Melleke/hadyn herdy What these messagers saidy vnto hem/they were right glady & ioyeful/andy answerdy ful mekely andy hemignely yeldyngy graces & thankynges to her lordy Melleke & to alle his companye. Andy shopey hem Withoute ony delaye to go With ỳ messagers & to obeye to the cõmandement of her lordy Melleke. Andy right anon they toke her Way to her lorde Melleke/ Andy right anon they toke her Way to her lordes court andy toke With hem sõm of her trewe frendes to make feyth for hem andy for to be her borowes. Andy Whan they were comen to the presence of Melleke he saidy to hem thise Wordes/ hit stondeth thus saydy Melleke & soth it is that causeles & Withoutey skyll & reson ye haue doy grete Iniury es to me to my Wif prudence & to my doughter also. For ye haue entrydy in to my hous by violence & haue doy suche oul trage that alle meny knowe Well that ye haue deseruydy deth Andy therfore Woldy I knowe of you Whether ye Will putte you to punysshyngy And the chastysingy & the vengeaũce of this oultrage in the Will of me & of my Wif or ellis not.

Thay the Wisest of hem thre answerdy for hem all & saide Syr saidy he We knowe Well that We be vnWorthy to come to the court of so grete a lordy & so Worthy as ye be/ For We haue so gretly mystaken vs & haue offendedy & gylteday in suche Wise agaynst youre hye lordship that trewly We haue deseruydy the deth/but yet for the grete goodnes & debonairte that alle the Worldy Witnessyeth of your psone/ We submytte vs to the excellence & hemignite of your graacious lordship/ & besechyng you of your merciable pite ye Wil cõsidere our grete repentaũce & lowe submission/andy graũte vs forgeuenes of

of our oultrageous treſpaas andy offenſis/ Jfor wel we knowen that youre liberal grace & mercy ſtreckyn ferther in to goodnes/ thay doy oure oultrageous gyltes & treſpaces in to wickednes/ Al be hit that curſedly & dampnably we haue agilted and agreuyd your hye lordſchip ¶

Thay melleke toke hem from the groundy ful benyngly and receyued her obligations & bondes by her othes vpon her pleges andy borowes And assigned hem a certain day to retorne vnto his court for to receyue andy accepte the Jugement that melleke wolde cõmande to be doñ on hem by the causes aforsaidy/ whiche thinges ordeyned euery man re tornedy to his owen hous. And whan dame prudence salbe her tyme/ she feyned and axedy her lordy melleke/ what ven geance he thoughte to take vpon his aduersaries/ To whiche melleke answerde and saide certes J thinke and purpose me fully to dischergte hem of alle that euer they haue & put hem in exile for euermore. certes saidy dame prudence/ this were a cruel sentence andy moche agaynst reson. ¶ For ye be riche ynowh andy haue none nede of other memes goodes. And ye myght ful lightly in this wise gete yow a ful co uetous name/ whiche is a vicyous lyuyng andy ought to be eschewyd of euery goody man ¶ For after the worde of thapostle/ couetyse is the rote of alle harmes And therfore hit were better to you to lese so moche goody of your owen. thay for to take of her goody in this manere/ For better it is to lese goody with worship/ that it is to wynne goody with vilonye andy shame/ And euery man ought to do his diligence andy besynes to gete hym a goody name And yet shal he not hooly beseye hym in kepyng of his goody

name ¶ And yet shal he not hooly kepe hym in kepyng of his goody name / but he shal alleway enforcen to do sume thing by whiche he may renouele or renewe his goody name For it is wreton that the olde goody loos of a man or goody name is some good and passith whan it is not newed ne renouelyd / ¶ And as towching that ye sayn / ye wole epple your aduersaryes / that thynketh me moche agayn reson and oute of mesure / considerynge the power that they haue yeue you vpon hem self ¶ And yet it is wreton that he is worthy to lese his pryuylege that mysuseth the might and the power that is yeue hym ¶ And I set caas that ye might emoyne hem that payne be ryght and be lawe / whiche that I trowe ye maye not do / I saye ye myght not put hit to execution ¶ For parauenture than were it lyke to re / torne to the warre as hit was before ¶ And therfore yf ye wyll that men do you obeyssaunce ye muste demene you more curteysly / this it to saye ye muste yeue more esy penaunce and Jugement / For it is wreton that he that most curteysly comandeth / to hym men moste obeye ¶ And therfore I pray yow that in thys necessyte and in thys nede ye caste yow for to ouercome your herte ¶ For Seneke saith / The that ouercometh his herte / ouercometh thwyes ¶ And Tullius sayth / Ther is no thyng so comendable in a grete lordy as whan he is debonayr and meke / and appeesith hym lightly ¶ And I pray you that ye wil now forbere to do vengeaunce in suche a maner that your goody name may be kept and conseruyd ¶ And that men may haue cause and mater to preyse yow of pyte and of mercy ¶ And that ye haue no cause to

repente yow of thing that is doy. For Seneke saith he
ouercometh an euyl maner that repenteth hym of his vic
torye/ Wherfore I praye you lete mercy be in your herte/to
theffect and to thentente that gody almyghty haue mercy
on yow in his laste Jugement. For seynt James saith in
his epistlis/ Jugement Withoute mercy shal be do to hym
that hath no mercy on an other Wight.

Than Melleke hady herdy the grete skylles andy resons
of dame Prudence andy her Wise Informations andy
techinges his herte began tenclyne to the Wille of his Wyf
Consideryng her grete entente conformedy hym anoy andy
assentedy to Worke after her counceyll/ Andy thankedy gody
of Whom procedeth alle goodnes andy vertue/that hym hath
sente a Wyf of so grete discrescion. Andy Whan the day cam
that his aduersaryes sholdy appere in his presence he spack
to hem ful goodly andy sayde in this Wise/ Al be hit so that
of your pryde andy presumption andy hie foly of your negli
gence andy vnoomyng ye haue myslory you andy trespas
sydy vnto me/yet for as mykyll as I se your grete humylite
andy that ye be sory andy repentaunte of your gyltes hit
constreyneth me to do you grace andy mercy/ Wherfore I
resseyue you to my grace andy forgeue you vterly alle the
offencys Iniurys andy Wronges that ye haue doy ayenst me
to this effecte & to this ende that gody of his endeles mercy
Will at the day of my dyynge forgyue me my gyltes/that
I haue trespassedy to hym in this Worldy/ For doubteles yf
We be sory andy repentaūt for our synnes andy gyltes/the
sight of our lordy gody is so fre & so mercyable that he Wil
forgieue vs our gyltes andy bryngе vs to the blysse that

neuer shal haue ende amen ✦

Here Endeth Chalcers tale of Melleke & Prudence his Wif & sophie his doughter ✦
And begynnyth the Monkis Prologe ✦

Whenne endid Was the tale of Melleke
And of Prudence & of her benignite
Our ost saide as I am feythful man
And be the precyous corpus madryan
I hadde leuyr than a barel of ale
That goody leef my Wif had herd this tale
For she is no thing of such pacience
As Was this Melleebes Wif Prudence
Be goddis bonys When I bete my knauys
She bringith me the grete clobbid staufs
And cryeth sle the doggis euerichon
And breke both bak and also boon
And yf that ony neyghbour of myn
Wol nat in chirche to my Wif enclyn
Or be so hardy to her trespas
Whan she comyth hom she rampith in my face
And cryeth fals coward Wreke thy Wif
Be corpus dis I Wil haue thy knyf
And thou shalt haue my distaf & go spynne
Fro day to nyght she Wol thus begynne
Allas she saith that euyr I Was shape
To Wedde a mylksop a coward ape
That Wol be ouerled With euery Wight

Thow darst not stonde be thy wyf a ryght
This is my liff, but yf that I wolde fight
And out atte dore, anone I moot me dight
And ellis I am lost, but yf that I
Be lik a wilde lioun fool hardy
I woot wel she wil do me sle som day
Som neyghbour and thamme go my way
For I am parlous with knyf in hond
Al be it that I, dar not her withstonde
For she is big in armys be my feith
That shal he fynde that here myspeth or saith
But lete vs passe awey from this matere
My lordy sire Monk he saith be mery of chere
For ye shul tellyn a tale trewly
Lo Roucheste stondith here fast by
Ride forth myn owen lordy breke not our game
But be my trouthe I knowe not your name
Whethir shal I calle you my lordy dan John
Or dan Thomas dan Robert or dan alon
Or of what hous be ye be your fadir kyn
I wolde to god thou hast a ful fair chyn
It is a gentil pasture there thou gost
Thou art nat lik a penaunce goost
Vp on my feith thou art som officere
Som worthy sexten or som celerer
For be my fadir soule as to my dome
Thou art a maistir when thou art at hoom
No poure cloisterer ne no per nouice
But a gouernour wily and wise

And therwith of brawn and of bonys
A wel faring persone for the nonys
I prey to god yeue hym confusion
That first the brought in to religion
Thow woldist haue be a tredefoule a right
Haddist thow as greet leue as thou hast myght
To pfourme al thy lust in gendure
Thou haddist begotyn many acreature
Allas why weriest thou so wide a cope
God yeue me sorow and I were pope
Not only thow but euery mighty man
Though he were shore vp on his pan
Shulde haue a wif for al this worlde is lorn
Religioun hath take vp al the corn
Of tredynge and borel men be shrympis
Of febil treys ther comyth wrechid ympis
This makith that our heiris be so sklendir
And febil that they may not wel engendre
This makith that our wyuys wol assay
Religious folk for they may better pay
Of lemus paiementis than molde be
Good woot no lussheburghs paye ze
But be not wroth my lord though I pley
Ful ofte in game a soth haue y herd say
This worthy monk took al in pacience
And saide I wol do my diligence
As fer as sowneth in to honeste
To telle you a tale or two or three
And yf you list to harkyn hidirward

I Wol yow ſayñ. of the lif of ſaint Edward
Or ellis tragedyes firſt Wol I telle
Of Whiche I haue an hundrid in my ſelle
Tregedy is forto telle a certeyn ſtory
As olde bokis makyn memorye
Of hem that ſtondyñ in greet proſperite
Andy is falle out of his degre
Into myſery andy endith Wrechidly
Andy they ben kraſyedy comynly
Of. vj. feet Which men clepyn exametron
In proſe eke ben enditidy many ou
Andy in metre many a ſondry Wyſe
Lo this ought ynough to ſuffiſe
Now harkenyth yf you liſt for to here
But firſt I beſeche yow in this matere
Thogh I be ordre telle not thiſe thingis
Be it of popis Emperours & kyngis
Andy aſtir her agis as men Writen fynde
But telle hem ſom before andy ſom behynde
As it comyth to my remembraunce
Haue me excuſidy of myn ignoraunce

¶ Here endith the Monkis prologh.

¶ Here begynneth the Tale.

I Wil be Waile in manere of tregedie
The harm of hem that ſtonden in hye degre
Andy fillen ſo that ther nas no remedy
To bringe hem out of her aduerſite
For certeyn Whenne that fortune liſt to fle
Ther may noman of her the cours Withholde

Many a man ouerthrowen hath ſhe
Beth Waar be this enſampil yongȝ andȝ olde
Lucifer though he an aungil Were
Andȝ nat a man at hym I Wil begynne
For thy fortune may nat aungel dere
From high degre yet fyl he for his ſynne
Douȝ in to helle Where he is yet ynne
O Lucifer brightiſt of aungellis alle
Now art thou ſathanas that maiſt not thrymme
Out of miſery Which thou art falle
Lo Sampſon Which Was annúciat
Be the aungel longe or his natiuite
Andȝ Was to godȝ almyghty conſecrat
Andȝ ſtoodȝ in nobles Whilech he myghte ſe
Was neuyr ſuch another as Was he
To ſpeke of ſtrengthe andȝ therto hardines
But to his Wyuys tolde he his ſecre
Throwgh Whiche he ſloW hym ſelf for Wrechidnes
Sampſon this nobil andȝ myghty champiouȝ
Without Wepen ſaue his hondis tWey
He ſlough andȝ al to rente the liouȝ
Tobardȝ his Weddynge Walkyngȝ be the Wey
His fals Wif coude hym pleſe andȝ prey
Til ſhe his counſel knelW andȝ ſhe vntreWe
Vnto his foos his counſel gan bewrey
Andȝ hym forſook andȝ took another neWe
An hundridȝ foxis took Sampſon for Ire
Andȝ al her tailis he to gedir bonde
Andȝ ſette the foxis tailis al on fyre

For he in euery tayl. hath put a brondy
And they brent alle the ownes in that londy
And her olyues and her vynes eek
A thousandy men eke he slow with his honde
And hadde no wepyn with hym but an asse cheek
Whan they were slayn so thristidy hym that he
Was wel nyhe lorn for whiche he gan to prey
That gody wolde of his pyne haue som pite
And sende hym drynk or ellis muste he dye
And of an asse cheke that was so drye
Out of a wangy toth sprangy anon a welle
Of whiche he drank inowh shortly to seye
Thus halp hym gody. as Indicum can telle
Be leuy force at gasa on an nyght
Magre alle the philistenys of that Cyte
The gatys of the town he vp plight
And on his back y caryedy hem hath he
High vp on an hille where as men myght se
O nobil andy myghty Sampson leef andy dere
That strongy worthy andy nobil hath he
In alle this worlde ne hath he thy pere
This Sampson neythir sidir drank ne wyn
Ne on his hedy cam rasour non ne shere
Be precept of the messanger deuyne
For al his strengthe was in his heere
Of his strength he hady neuer pere
And. xy. yeer of ysrael he hady the gouernaunce
But after sone shal he wepe meny a teer
For a wommay broughte hym to myschaunce

Vnto his lemman dalida he tolde
That in his heris al his strengthe lay
And falsly to his foos hym sholde
And slepynge vpon a barm vpon aday
They made to clippe or shere his heer albay
And made his fomen al his craft aspien
And whenne that they hym fond in such aray
They bond hym first and put out his yen
But or his heer were clippid or shaue
Ther was no bonde that might hym bynde
But nowe is he put in prison in a caue
Where as they made hym atte querne grynde
O nobil Sampson strengist of mankynde
O whilom Jugge in glorie and in riches
Yet neuer lyke to the J fynde
Sith thou art from wele falle in to wrechidnes
The end of this caytif was as J shal say
His fomen maden a feste vp on aday
And made hym there before hem play
And this was in a tempil of greet aray
But atte laste he made a foul fray
For he two postis shook and made hem falle
And down fil the tempil & al there it lay
And slow hym self and eke his fomen alle
This is to say the Prynces euerichon
And eke a thousand bodyes were there slayn
With fallyng of the greete tempil of stoon
Of Sampson wole J nomore sayn
Seth waar of this ensampil old & playn

That noman telle her counceyll to her Wyuys
Of ſuche thingis as they Wolde haue ſecrete fayñ
Yf that hit towche her lymys or her lyuys
OF Hercules the ſouereyn conquerour
Syngynge his Werkis loude & high renoun
For in his tyme. of ſtrengthe he baar the flour
He ſlough andy rafte the ſkynne of the lioun
Andy of Centaurus leyde the boſt adoun
He arpies ſlough the cruel bridis felle
He the goldyn applis rafte fro the dragoñ
He drowe out Cerberus the houndy of helle
He ſlough the cruel tyraunt buſurus
Andy made his hors to frete hym fleſch & booñ
He ſlough the ſtery ſerpent venemous
Of Achilles two hornes brak he one
Andy he ſlough Cakus in a caue of ſtoon
He ſlough the geaunt Anthens the ſtronge
He ſlough the gryſly boor andy that anone
Andy baar his heedy. vp on his ſpere longe
Was neuer Wight ſith the Worlde began
That ſlough ſo many monſtris as didy he
Throwh the Wide Worlde his name ran
What for his ſtrengthe andy his bountee
Andy euery reme Wente he for to ſe
He Was ſo ſtrongy that noman myghte hym lette
Andy bothe Worldis endis ſeith Thimothe
In ſtede of boundis he of bras a piler ſette
A lemman hade this nobil champioun
That highte deyanyra as freſſh as may

And as clerkis make mentioun
She hath hym sent a sherte fresh and gay
Allas this sherte and wel away
Emuenemyd was subtilly with alle
That er he hade werid it half a day
It made his flesh fro his bonys falle
But natheles som clerkis here excusyn
Be on that highte nessus that it makedy
Be as he may I wol her not acusey
But on his body the sherte he werid al nakidy
Tyl the flesh was for the venym slakidy
And whanne he salwe non other remedye
In hoot colis he hath hym self rakyd
For with no venym deynedy he to dye
Thus starf this worthy mighty heraules
Lo who may truste in fortune ony throwe
For hym that folowith al this worlde of prees
Or he he waar is ofte leyd ful lowe
Ful wise is he that hym self can knowe
Be waar for whanne that fortune list to glose
Thanne waitith she her may to doun throwe
Be such albey as he woldy lest suppose
The mighty trone the precyous tresour
The glorius septre and the ryal maieste
That hade the kyng Nabugodonosor
With tunge vnmethe may discribidy be
The tvvyes wan Jherusalem that cyte
The vessel of the tempyl he with hym lady
At Babilon was his soueravn see

In Whiche his glory and his delit he had
The fayreſt childryn of the bloody Ryal
Of Jeruſalem he dede to gelde anone
And made ech of hem to be his thral
Among alle other daniel Was one
That Was the Wiſeſt child of euerychone
For he the dremys of the kyng expowned
There as in Caldey clerkys Was ther none
That Wiſte to What fyn his dremys ſowned
This proud kyng let make a ſtatu of golde
Sixti cubitis long and ſeuyn in brede
To Whiche ymage both yong and old
Commaundid he to loute and haue in drede
Or in a furneys ful of flames rede
He ſholde be ded that Wolde not obeye
But neuer Wolde accorde to that dede
Daniel ne his yonge felowes tweye
This kyng of kyngis proud and elate
He Wende god that ſittith in mageſte
Ne myghte not bereue his aſtate
But ſodenly he loſte his dignite
And lik abeſt hym ſemyd forto be
And eet hey as an oxe and lay ther oute
In rayn With Wilde beſtis Walkid he
Tyl a certeyn tyme Was come aboute
And lik an eglis fetheris Were his heris
And naylis lik birdes clawis Were
God releuyd hym at certeyn yeris
And yaf hym Witte & than With many a teer

He thonkidȝ godȝ andȝ auȝr his lyf in feer
Was he to do amys or more trespas
Andȝ er that he laidȝ was oȝ his beere
He knelb that godȝ was ful of myght & grace
His sone whiche that highte Balthasar
That heldȝ the regne aftir his fadir day
He by his fader coude not bewaar
For proudȝ he was of herte andȝ of aray
Andȝ eke an ydolastir was he ay
His high astat assuryd hym in pryde
But fortune cast hym doun andȝ there he lay
Andȝ sodenly his regne gan diuide
A feste he made vnto his lordis alle
Vp oȝ a tyme he made hem blithe be
Andȝ thamme his officers gan he calle
Goth bryngȝ forth the vesselis quodȝ he
Whiche that my fadir in his prosperite
Out of the tempyl of Jherusalem beraft
Andȝ to our goddis thanke we
Of honour that our eldrys with vs laft
His wif his lordis andȝ his concubynys
Ay dronkyn whilis her appetitis last
Out of thyse nobil vesselis sondry wynes
Andȝ oȝ a wal this kyngȝ his yen cast
Andȝ saw an hondȝ armeles that wrot fast
For feer of whiche he quok andȝ sighidȝ sore
This hondȝ that Balthasar made so sore agast
Wrot Mane, techel, phares andȝ nomore
In al that londȝ magicien was ther noȝ

That coude expowne What this letter ment
But daniel expowned it anon
And saide kyng+god to thy fadir sent
Glorye and honour regne tresour and rent
And he Was proud & no thing god he dred
And therfore gret Wrath god vp on hym sent
An hym bereafte the regne that he hadde
He Was out cast of mannys company
With assis Was his habitation
And eet hey as a best in Weet and dry
Til that he knelt be grace and be reson
That god of heuyn hath domination
Ouer euery regne and euery creature
And thanne had god of hym compassion
And hym restoryd his regne and his figure
Eke thou that art his sone art proud also
And knowest alle thyse thyngis pryuyly
And art rebel to god and his foo
Thou drank eek of his Vessels boldly
Thy Wif eek and thy Wenchis synfully
Dronk of the same Vesselis sondry Wynys
And heryed fals goddis aursidly
Therfore to the schapyn greet peyne is
This hond Was sent from god that on the Walle
Wroot mane techel phares trust me
Thy regne is don+thou Weyyst not al
Diuided is thy regne and hit schal be
To medes and to percens quod he
And that same nyght the kyng Was slawe

And Darius occupied his regre
Though he therto hadde neythir right ne lawe
Lordingis her by ensaumpil mowe ye take
Howe that in lordship is no sikyrnesse
For Whenne that fortune Wyl a man forsake
He berith alwey his regne and his riches
And eke his frendis bothe more and les
And That man hath frendis thowgh fortune
Mys hap Wol make hym enemyes I gesse
This Prouerbe is ful soth & ful comune

Enobia of Belmarie quene
As Britith Perseus of her nobles
So Worthy Was in armys and so kene
That no Wight passid her in hardynes
Ne in lynage ne in noy other gentilnes
Of kyngis bloody of Perse is she descendid
I say that she hady not most fiersnes
But of her shappe she myght not be amendid
From her childhoode I fynde that she kedy
Office of Wommay and to Wode she Went
And many a Wilde bestis bloody she shedy
With arowis broody that she to hem sent
She Was so swift that she anoy hem hent
And Whanne that she Was elder she Wol'd kylle
Lioums liberdis and hem alto rent
And in her armys Welde hem at her Wille
She durste Wilde bestis demys seke
And Wenne in the mountey al the nyght
And slepe Vnder abussh and she coude eke

Wrastil be verry force and verry myght
With ony yongy man Were he neuer so Wight
There myghte nothing in her armys stonde
She kepte her maydenhede from euery Wight
To noman deynedy she to be bonde
But atte last her frendis haue her maryedy
To Onedak a prince of a Cite
Al Were it so, that she hem longe taryedy
And ye shul vnderstonde how that he
Hadde suche fantesies as hady she
But natheles Whey they Were knet in fere
They lyuyd in ioye and in felicite
For ech of theym hadde other leef and dere
Saue o thing that she nolde neuer assent
Be no Wey that he sholde be her by
But onys for it Was her pleyn entent
To haue a childy the Worlde to multiplye
And also sone as she myghte aspye
That she Was not With childe With that dede
Thanne Wolde she suffir hym do his fantesie
Est sonys and nat but onys oute of drede
And yf she Were With childe at that cast
Nomore shulde he pleye that game
Til fully .xl. daies Were y past
Thenne Wolde she onys suffir hym the same
Al Were this Onedak Wilde or tame
He gat nomore of here for thus she sayde
It Was to Wyuys lecherie and shame
In other caas yf men With hem playde

Two ſonys he this Onedak had ſhe
The Whiche ſhe kept in Vertu and lettrure
But nold vnto our tale turne We
I ſay that Worſhipfull creature
And Wife therWith & large With meſure
So penibil in Warre and curteys eke
Ne nomre labour myghte in Werre endure
Was non, though al this Worlde men ſhuld ſeche
Her riche aray myghte not be tolde
As Wel in veſſel as in clothinge
She Was al glad in Perry & in gold
And eke ſhe lefte not for non huntynge
To haue of ſondry tongis folk knowynge
Whenne that ſhe leyſer hadde and forto entende
To lerne bokis Was al her likynge
Hold ſhe in Vertu her lif myghte diſpende
And ſhortly of this ſtory forto trete
So doughty Was her huſbond as ſhe
That they conquerydd many regnes grete
In the orient With many a feyr cite
Appertenaunt vnto the maieſte
Of Rome and With ſtrenghte held hem faſt
Ne neuer myghte her fomen do her flee
Al the Whilez that Onedakis dayes laſt
Her batellis Who ſo liſt hem forto rede
Agayn Sapor the kyng and other mo
And hold al this proces fil in dede
Why ſhe conquerydd & What title ſhe had therto
And aftir of hir myſchief and her Woo

Holb that ſhe was beſegid and J take
Lat hym to my maiſtyr Petrark go
That Brittiſh ynolb of this J vndertake
Wherme Onedack was ded ſhe myghtily
The remys held and with her olben hond
Agayns her foos ſhe faught trelbly
That ther nas prince ne kyng in al that londe
But were glad yf they that grace fonde
That ſhe ne ſholde vp on his lond werreye
With her they made aliaunce be bonde
To be in pees and lete hem ryde and pleye
The Emperour of Rome Claudius
Ne hym beforn the Romayn Galiene
Ne durſte neuer be ſo corageous
Ne noy ermyn ne none egipcien
Ne furrien ne noy arabien
With ynne the felde that durſt with her fight
Leſt that ſhe wolde hem with her hondis ſleen
Or with her meyne put hem to flight
In kyngis habit wente her ſonys tbo
As heyris of here remys alle
And hermamo and titamallo
Her namys were as perciens hem calle
But ay fortune hath in her bony galle
This myghty quene may no while endure
Fortune made her out of her regne falle
To wrechidneſſe and to myſauenture
Aurilian wherme that he the gouernaunce

Of Rome cam in his hondis tweye
He shoop vp on this quene to do vengeance
And with his legions he took his wey
Toward Cenobie and shortly forto seye
He made her fle and atte laste her hent
And fetherid hir & eke her childryn tweye
And wan the londe & hom to Rome he went
Among othir thing that he wan
Her chare that of gold was wrought & perre
This grete Romayn this aurilian
Hath with hym lad that for mey sholde se
Before his triumphe walkid she
With goldyn cheynes on her necke hangynge
Crowned she was as aftir her degre
And ful of perre chargid her clothynge
Allas fortune she that whilom was
Dredful to kyngis and to Emperouris
Now galwith al the pepil on her allas
And she that helmyd was in stark shouris
And wan before crones strong & touris
Shal on her hed now were auetrempte
And she that bare the septre ful of flouris
Shal bere a distaf her cost forto quypte
OF Melan grete Barnabo Viscounte
God of delite & scorge of lumbardye
Why shulde nat I thy fortune acounte
Sithen in estat thou clombyn were so hye
Thy brothir sone that was thy dowbyl alye
For he thy neuewe was and sone in lawe

With ynne his prison made the to dye
But Why ne holl Woot J that thou Were slaWe
OF the erle Engelyñ of pise the langour
Ther may no tunge telle for pite
But litil out of pise stondith a tour
In Whiche tour im pryson put Was he
And With hym his litil children three
The eldist skarsly .vi. yeer Was of age
Allas fortune it Was gret cruelte
Suche briddis forto put im suche a cage
Dampned he Was to deth im that prisoñ
For woger Whiche Bisshop Was of pyse
Had on hym maad a fals suggestioñ
Thorwh Whiche the pepil gan on hym aryse
And put hym im pryson in suche a Wyse
As ye haue herd and mete & drynk he hadde
And therWith all it Was ful poore & badde
And on aday it be fil that im that hour
When that his mete Was Wont to be brought
The gailer shitte the doris of the tour
He herde it Wel but he saW it nought
And im his herte ther fil a thought
That they for hunger Wolde do hym to dieñ
Allas quod he allas that J Was Wrought
Therwith the teris fille from his yeñ
His yonge sone that three yeer Was of age
Unto his fader he sayde Why do ye Wepe
Whenne Wol our Gayler bringe our potage
Is ther no morsel breed that he do kepe

I am so hungry that I may not slepe
Nolw wolde god that I mighte slepe euyr
Thanne sholde no hunger in my wombe crepe
Ther is no thing than bredy that me were leuyr
Thus day be day this childy gan to crye
Til in his fadris barm adouy it lay
And sayde farwel fader I mot dye
For this payne no lenger suffre I may
And whenne the wosful fader dedy hym say
For wo his armys he gan to byte
And sayde allas fortune and welawey
Thy fals whele my wo I may wyte
His othir childy wende that for hunger it was
That he his armys gnelw & not for woo
And sayde fader do not so allas
But rathir eet the flesh vp on vs tlwo
Our flesh tholw yaf vs take our flesh vs fro
And ete ynough right thus the childy sayde
And aftir that with ymme aday or tlwo
The childy leyde hym douy in his lappe & deyde
Hym self dispeirydy eek for hunger starf
Thus endidy the mighty erle of pyse
From high estate fortune from hym carf
Of this tragedye it oughte I nough suffyse
Who so wil here it in a lengir wyse
Redith the grete poet of ytaile
That hight daunte for he can it deuyse
Fro poynt to poynt nat o word wil he fayle
Al though that Nero were as vicyous

As eny fende that lith ful lolde adoun
Yet he as tellith hs Snetonius
Al this Worlde hadde in fubiection
Bothe eft and Weft and feptemtrion
Of Rubies, faphires and of perlis White
Were alle his clothis browdid bp and doun
For he in gemmys gretly gan delyte
More delicat, more pompons of aray
More proude Was neuer Emperour than he
That ilke cloth that he hadde Werydy o day
After that tyme he nolde it neuer fe
Nettis of goold thredy had he gret plente
To fiffhe in tiber Whenne he lift to pleye
His luftis Were as lalde in his degre
For fortune as his frendy Wolde hym obeye
He Rome brent for his dilycacye
The fenatours he flough bp on aday
To here hold that Wommen Wolde Wepe & crye
And flough his brothir & by his fuftir lay
His moder made he in a pytous aray
For he her Wombe flytte to be holde
Where he conceyued Was fo Wel alway
That he fo litpl of his modir tolde
No teris out of his eyen for that fight
Ne cam but fayde a fayr Womman Was fhe
Gret Wondir is that he coude or myght
Be domefman of her dedy beaute
The Wyn to brynge comaundidy he
And dranke anon non other Wo he made

Whenne might is ioyned vnto cruelte
Allas to depe wol the tenym wade
In yonthe a maistir hadyn this Emperour
To teche hym lettrure andy curtesye
For of moralite he was the flour
Andy in his tyme but yf his bokis lye
Andy whilis his maister hadde of hym maistrie
He made hym so komynge andy so souple
That longe tyme it was or tirampye
Or ony vice durste in hym vnsouple
Seneca his maistir was of which I aduyse
Be cause Nero hady of hym such drede
For he for his vicis wolde hym chastise
Discretly as by worde andy not be dede
Syne he wolde say an Emperour moot nede
Be vertuous andy hate Tyrampye
For whiche he made hym in a bath to blede
On bothe his armys til he must dye
This Nero hadde eek of a custumaunce
In yongthe ayens his maistir to ryse
Whiche aftirwardy him thoughte a gret greuaunce
Be cause he ofte wolde hym chastyse
Therfore he made hym dye in this wyse
To chese in a bath to dye in this manere
Rathir thanne to haue another turmentyse
Andy thus hath Nero slayn his maistir dere
Now fyl it so that fortune liste no lenger
The high pryde of Nero to cherisshe
For though he were strongy yet was she strenger

She thoughte thus he godȝ I am to nyce
To sette a may that is fulfillidȝ of vice
In his degre andȝ an Emperour hym calle
He godȝ out of his sete I wol hym trice
Whanne he lest wenyth sommest shal he falle
The pepil roos vpon hym on an nyght
For his defaute andȝ whanne he it aspyedȝ
Out of his wris anon he hath hym dight
Alone andȝ there he wende haue be alyedȝ
The knocklidȝ fast andȝ ay the more he cryedȝ
The fastir shit they the dorys alle
Tho wiste he wel he hadȝ hym self begilydȝ
Andȝ wente his way no lengir durste he calle
The pepil cryde andȝ romblidȝ vp andȝ dovn
That with his eris he herde holl that they sayde
Where is this fals treiteur this neron
For feer ful neer out of his witte he breyde
Andȝ to his goddis pitously he seyde
For socour but it myghte nat be tyde
For drede of this hym thoughte that he deyde
An ray im to a gardyn hym to hyde
Andȝ in this gardyn fondȝ he chorlis tweye
Andȝ sittyngȝ be.a.fyre greet andȝ reedȝ
Andȝ to the chorlis two he gan to preye
To sle hym andȝ to girde of his hedȝ
That to his body whan he were dedȝ
Were no despyt doñ for his defame
Hym self he slough he coude no bettir rede
Of whiche fortune lowe he andȝ hadȝ game

WAs neuyr Capteyn vnder a kyngh
That regnes mo put in fubiection
Ne ſtrenger Was in feldy of alle thingh
As in his tyme ne gretter of renoury
Ne more Pompous in high preſumpcion
Than Olopherñ Whiche fortune atte laſte
So licorouſly ladde hym vp andy doury
Til that he dedy Was or that he Wiſte
Not onky that this Worlde hadde of hym alle
For leſingy of riches andy liberte
But he made euery man reneye his lalle
Nabugodonoſor Was lordy ſaide he
None other gody ſholde honouredy be
Ayens his heſte ther dar no Wight treſpas
Sane in Betulia a ſtrongy cyte
Where Eliachim Was preſt of that place
But take kepe of the dethy of Olopherñ
Amydy his oſt he dronke lay al nyght
With ynne his tente large as is a herñ
Andy yet for al his pompe andy al his myght
Judith a Womman as he lay vpright
Slepinge his hedy of ſmoot & fro his tente
Ful pryuely ſhe ſtale from euery Wight
Andy to the cyte ſhe hath it ſente
WHat nedith it of kyngh Antiochus
To telle his high andy ryal maieſte
His high pryde his Werk Renemus
For ſuch another man nas neuyr as he
Redith What that he Was in Machabe

And redith the proude Workis that he leyde
And Why he fil from his prosperite
And in an hiȝt hoW Wrechidly he deyde
Fortune hym hadde enhaunsid so in pryde
That stral̄y he Wende he myghte atteyne
Unto the sterris Up on euery syde
And in a balaunce to Weye ech mountey̅n
And alle the flodis of the se restreyn
And goddis peple hadde he most in hate
Hem Wolde he sle in tourment and in pey̅n
Wenynge that god ne myghte his pryde abate
And for Nichamore and Timothe
Wiche Jelwes Were renausid myghtily
Unto the Jelwes suche an hate had he
That he hadde gretthid his chare ful hastely
And swoor and saide ful despitously
Unto Jerusalem. he Wolde eftsone
To Wreke his Ire on it ful cruelly
But of his purpos Was he let ful sone
God for his manace hym sore smoot
With inuisibil Wounde ay incurabyl
That in his guttes carf so and hoot
That his peynys Were Importable
And certenly the Wreche Was Unresonabil
For many anamys guttis did he peyne
But from his purpos aursid & dampnabil
For al his smert. he nolde hym restreyne
But had anon pareyled his oost
And sodenly or he than Was Waar

Gody daunteyd alle his pryde andy al his boſt
For he ſo ſore fil out of his chare
That alle his lymys andy his ſkyn to tare
So that he ne myghte go ne ryde
But in a chayer men aboute hym baar
Al for brofidy bothe bak andy ſyde
The Wreche of gody hym ſmot ſo cruelly
That in his body Wickyd Wormys crept
Andy therWith al he ſtank ſo horribly
That none of alle his meyne that hym kept
Whethir that he Wook or ellis ſlepte
Ne mighte not of hym the ſtynk endure
Andy in this myſchief he Wayled & eke Wepte
Andy knelb gody lordy of euery creature
To al his oſt andy to hym ſelf alſo
Ful Waltſom Was the ſtynk of his careyn
No man mighte hym here to ne fro
Andy in his ſtynk andy in his horrible peyn
He ſtarf ful Wretchidly on a mountayn
Thus hath this Robber & this homicide
That many a man made to Wepe & playne
Such guerdon as belongith Vnto pryde
The ſtory of aliſaundir is ſo cōmune
That euery Wight that hath diſcreacion
Hath herdy ſumWhat or al of his fortune
This Wide Worlde as in concluſion
He Wan/be ſtrengthe andy his renoun
They Were glady for pees Vnto hym ſende
The pryde of man andy boſte he leydy a doun

Where so he cam in to the Worldis ende
Comparison myghte yet neuer be makid
Betwix hym and another conquerour
For al this Worlde for drede of hym hath quakid
He Was of knyghthod and of fredom flour
Fortune hym made the heir of high honour
Saue Wyn e Wommen no thing might a swage
His high entent in armes and labour
So Was he ful of louynge corage
What pite Were it to hym though I you tolde
Of darius and of a hundrid thousandy mo
Of princis. erlis. and kyngis. bolde
Whiche he conquerydy e broughte to Woo
I say as fer as aman may ryde or go
The Worlde Was his. What sholde I more deuyse
For though I Wrote or tolde you euyr mo
Of his knyghthood it mighte not suffyse
Xij. yeer he regnedy as I rede in Machabe
Philippis sone of Macedo he Was
That first Was kyng of grece that countre
O Worthy gentyl Alisaunder allas
That euyr sholde falle such acas
Empoysondy of thy folk thow Were
Thy strongy fortune hath tournydy in to ay aas
And for the ne Wepte she neuer ateer
Who shal yeue men terys to compleyne
To the of gentilnesse and of franchyse
That all the Worlde Weldidy in his demeyne
And yet hym thoughte it mighte not suffyse

So ful was his corage of high empriſe
Allas who ſhal me helpe to endite
Fals fortune andy poiſon to diſpiſe
The which of al this woo I wite
Be wiſedom manhoody andy high labour
From humbilheedy andy fro ryal maieſte
Up woos he Julius the conquerour
That al the occident be londe andy ſee
Be ſtrengthe of hondy or ellis be treete
Andy vnto Rome made hem tributary
Andy ſith of Rome Emperour was he
Tyl that fortune wey his aduerſary
O mighty Ceſar that in Theſſaly
Ayens Pompeius fadir thyn in ſalwe
That of the ozyent hadde al the chiualry
As fer as that the day begynneth to dalwe
They ỹ thorough knyghthoody haſt take ꝛ ſtalwe
Saue felwe folk that with Pompeius fledde
Thorou whiche thoū puttiſt al the orient in alwe
Thanke fortune that ſo wel the ſpedde
But noū a litil while I wil belwayl
This Pompeius this nobil gouernour
Of Rome whiche that fley at this bataille
I ſay oy of his men a fals traitour
His hedy of ſmoot to wynne hym fauour
Of Julius andy to hym the hedy broughte
Allas Pompeye of the ozyent conquerour
That fortune vnto ſuch a fyn the broughte
To Rome agayn repeyrith Julius

With his triumphe laureat ful hye
But on a tyme Brutus Cassius
That euyr hadde of his high astat enuye
Ful pryuily hadde maad conspiresye
Ayens this Julius in subtil Wyse
And cast the place in Whiche he sholde dye
With boydekyns as I shal you deuyse
This Julius vnto the Capitoly Went
Up on ady as he Was Wont to gon
And in the Capitoly anon hym hent
This fals Brutus on of his foul foon
And stikyd hym With boydekyns anon
With many a Wounde & thus they leet himlye
But neuer gruntyd he at no strook but oon
Or ellis at his Wo but yf his story lye
So manly Was this Julius of herte
And so Wel louyd estatly honeste
That thought his dedly Woundis so sore smert
His mantel ouer his hippis cast he
For noman sholde se his priuyte
And as he lay in dyynge on a traunce
And Wiste verily that dye shulde he
Of honeste hit hadde he remembraunce
Lucan vnto this story I recomende
And to Sneton and to Valery also
That of this story Writen Word and ende
Holde that thyse conquerours tWo
Fortune Was first frendy & sithen foo
Noman truste vp on his fauour longe

But haue here in a Wayte for euermo
Witnes on alle the conquerours stronge
The riche Cresus Whilom kyng of lyde
Of Whiche Cresus Citrins sore hym drady
Yet Was he caught amydy al his peyde
And to brenne men to the fire hym hady
But suche arayñ douy fro the firmament shadde
That queynte the fire andy made hym to scape
But to be Waar yet no grace he hady
Tyl fortune on the galoWis made hym gape
Whenne he ascapedy Was he coude nat stynte
Forto begynne a neW aray agayñ
He Wende Wel for that fortune hym sent
Suche that he a scapidy thurgh the rayñ
That of his foos he mighte not be slayñ
And suche a sWeuyn vp on a nyght he mette
Of Whiche he Was so proude & eke so feyñ
That in vengeaunce he aSt his herte sette
Vpon a tre he Was as hym thoughte
There Jupiter hym Wesssh bothe hals & syde
And Phebus eek a fair toWail hym broughte
To drye hym With & therWith Wept his pryde
And to his doughter that stoody hym besyde
Whiche that he knelt in high sentence habounde
He bady her telle What it signifiedy
And she his dremys right thus expouniedy
The tre quody she the galoWis is to mene
And Jupiter betokenyth snoW and rayñ
And Phebus With his toWel so clene

Be tokeneth the ſomme kemys ſoth to ſayñ
Thou ſchalt an hangidy be fadir certeyñ
Rayn ſchal the waſſhe andy ſomme ſchal the dzye
Thus ſhe warnedy ful plat andy ful pleyñ
His doughter that callydy was Phanye
An hangidy was Creſus the proudy kyngy
His ryal trone mighte hym not auaylle
Tragedy is noy other maner thingy
Ne can in ſyngrye ne kewayle
For that fortune alday wol aſſaylle
With vnwaar ſtrook the regnes that be proude
For whemme men truſt in her thay wol ſhe faylle
Andy couer her bright face vnder a cloude

Here endith the Monkes tale .

TO quody our ooſte ſyr nomore of this
That ye haue ſaidy is ynough ywis
Andy mykyl more for mykyl kewynes
Is right ynough to mykyl folk I ges
Your talis doy vs no diſport ne game
Wherfore ſir Monk Piers Adam be your name
I pray yow hertly tel vs ſumwhat ellis
For ſikirly nere clynkyngy of your bellis
That oy your bridil hongyn oy euery ſyde
Be kewyn kyngy that for vs alle dyde
I ſholde or this fallen doun for ſlepe
Al though the ſlough hade neuyr be ſo depe
Thamme hade your tale al be toldy in keyñ
For certenly as thyſe clerkis ſeyñ
Where as a may may haue noy audience

Not helpith it to telle his sentence
And wel I woot the substaunce is in me
Yf ony thing shal wel reportyd be
Sere say sumwhat of huntyng I you pray
Nay quod this monk I haue no lust to play
Now lete another telle as I haue told
Than spak our ost with mylde speche & bold
And sayde to the Nonnys preest anone
Com ner thou preest com hidir sir Johh
Tel vs suche thing as may our hertis glade
Be blithe though thou ryde vp on a Jade
What though thy hors be foul and lene
Yf he wol serue the recke the not a bene
Loke that thy herte be mery euyr moo
Yes sir quod he so moot y goo
But I be mery I wis I wol be blamyd
And right anon his tale he hath attamyd
And thus he sayde to vs euerichon
This swete preest this goostly man sir Johh
¶ Here endeth the prologe of the Nonnys preest
¶ And here begynneth his tale.
A Poure wydwe som deel stept in age
Was somtyme dwellyng in a cotage
Besyde a grove stondyng in a dale
This widwe of whiche I telle my tale
Syn that day that she was last a wyf
In pacience ledde a ful simpyl lyf
For litel was her catel and her rent
By husbondrye suche as god her sent

She ſondy her ſelf andy eek her doughtryn two
Thre large ſowys hady she andy nomo
Thre kyne andy eek a sheep that highte malle
Ful soty was her bour andy eek her halle
In whiche she eet meny a ſondir meel
Of poynaunt ſawce nedith her neuer adeel
Ne deynte morſel paſſidy thorwh her throte
Her diet was accordaunt to her cote
Replecion ne made hir neuer ſyke
A temperat diet was hir phiſyke
Andy exercise andy hertis ſuffiſaunce
The golte lete her no thingy forto daunce
Ne replexion shente not her hedy
No wyn dranke she whyte ne redy
Her bordy was moſt ſeruydy with whit & blak
Milk & brouny bredy in whiche she ſondy no lak
Salt bacon̄ andy ſomtyme an ey
For she was as amaner of a dey
A yerdy she hadde encloſidy al aboute
With drye ſtickis andy dichidy without
In whiche she hadde a cok highte chauntecleer
In al the londy of crowtyngy nas his peer
His vois was merier than the mery orgon̄
On maſſe dayes that in chirche goon̄
Wel ſikerer was his crowtyngy in his loge
Than is a clocke or in ony abbey ay orloge
By nature he crewe eche aſſencion̄
Of the equynoxion in the toun
For whenne degrees. xv. were aſcendidy

Than cryb he that it myghte not be amendid
His comb was redder than the fyn coral
And batellid as it had be a castel wal
His bil was blak as ony geet it shon
Lik asure were his leggis and his ton
His naylis whitter than the lily flour
And lik the burned gold was his colour
This gentil cok hadde in his gouernaunce
Seuen hennys to do with his plesaunce
Whiche were his sistris and his paramouris
And wonder lik to hym as of colouris
Of whiche the fairist hewid in the throte
Was clepid faire damysel Pertelote
Curteys she was discreet and debonaire
And compenabil and had hir self so faire
Syn that tyme that she was seue nyght olde
That trewlich she hath the herte in holde
Of chauntecleris lokyng in euery lith
He loueth her so that wel was hym therwith
Whan the bright sonne gan to sprynge
Hit was a melodye to here hem synge
In swete accorde my leef is fare in londe
For that tyme as I haue vnderstonde
Bestis and briddis coude speke and synge
And so it fil that in the dawenynge
Chauntecleer among his wyuys alle
Sat on his perche that was in the halle
And nept hym sat his faire Pertelote
This chauntecleer gan to gronе in his throte

As a man in his dreme is drecchidy sore
And Whamme that Pertelot thus herde hym rore
She Was agast and sayde herte dere
What eylith yoW to gRone in this manere
Ye be a Reery sleper fy for shame
And he answerde thus Madame
I pray yoW that ye take it not in greef
Be god I mette I Was in such myschief
Right noW that myn herte is sore a fright
NoW god my sWeuen he reche a right
And kepe my body out of foul prisoun
I mette that I romedy Up and doWn
With ymre our yerde Where I salW a best
Was lyk an hounde and Wolde haue made a reste
Up on my body and Wolde haue had me ded
His colour Was betWixt yelоW and red
And tippyd Was his tayl and bothe his eris
With blak Unlike the remenaunt of his heris
His snoWte smal With glоWyng eyen tWeye
Yet for his loke almost for feer I deye
This causith me my gronyng doutles
Abey quod she fy for shame hertles
Alas quod she for be god above
NoW haue ye lost myn herte and al my loue
I can not loue a coWarde be my feyth
For certis What so ony Wоmman seith
We alle desiren yf it myghte be
To haue husbondis hardy Wyse and fre
And secret and noN nygardy ne no fool

Ne hym that is agaſt of euery tool
Ne none auaumtour be gody aboue
Holb durſt ye ſey for ſhame vnto your loue
That ony thyng myghte make you a feerde
Haue ye no mannys herte & haue a berde
Allas andy comme ye be a ferdy of ſweuenys
No thyng but vaynte gody woot in ſweuene is
Sweuenys engendren of replecion
And of ſymme andy of complecion
Wher humours been to habundaunt in a wight
Certis this dreme whicke ye haue met to nyght
I telle yolb trouthe ye may truſt me
Cometh of your ſupflupte & rede colour parde
Whiche cauſe folk to drede in her dremys
Of arolbes andy of fyre with rede lemys
Of grete beſtes that wole hem byte
And alle as a Jape not worth a myte
Right as the humour of Melancolye
Cauſeth many a man in ſlepe to crye
For feer of grete bolis andy beris blake
Or ellis blake deuylles wol hem take
Of humours coude I telle alſo
That worken a man in ſlepe mykyl wo
But I wil paſſe as lightly as I can
Lo Catoy whiche that was a wyſe man
Sayde he not thus. do no fors of dremys
Nolb ſir quod ſhe whan we ſle fro the bemys
For goddis loue as takith ſum laxatif
Up peryl of my ſoule andy my lif

That bothe of coler and of malencolye
Ye purge you and for ye shul not tary
Though in this town be non apotecary
I shal my self two herbis teche yow
That shal be for your hele & for your prow
And in your yerd tho herbis shal I fynde
The Whiche haue of her proper kynde
To purge you benethe and eke aboue
Forget not this for goddis owen loue
Ye be right colerik of complexion
Where the sonne is in his ascension
Ne fynde ye not of humours hote
For yf ye do I dar ley a grote
Thanne shal ye haue a feuyr terciane
Or an agew that may be your bane
A day or two ye shul haue digestyuys
Of wormys or ye take your laxatiuys
Of laureal centory and of fumetory
Or ellis of the elderberyes that growen ther by
Of Catapuce or of gaytre berys
Of herbe yue growyng in your yerd that mery is
Pluk hem vp as they growe and ete hem yn
Be mery husbond for your fadir kyn
Dredith no dreme I can say you nomore
Madame quod he gramercy of your lore
But natheles as touching Catoun
That of Wisedom hath suche a gret renoun
That he bad no dremys for to drede
Be god men may in olde bokis rede

Of many a man more of auctorite
Than ayr Caton Was so moot y the
That al the reuers sayth of his sentence
And̄ haue Wel founde be experience
That dremys be significacions
As Wel of ioye as of tribulacions
That folk enduryn̄ in this lyf present
Ther nedith to make of this non̄ argument
The verey preef shewith it in dede
One of the gretteste auctor that men rede
Saith thus that sumtyme two felowis Went
On pilgremage in ful good entent
And̄ happid so they comyn̄ in a toun
Where as ther Was suche congregacion
Of pepyl and̄ eke of streit herbegage
That they ne fond̄ as mykyl as a cotage
In Whiche they bothe mighte ly loggid̄ be
Wherfore they muste of necessite
As for that nyght departe compan̄ye
And̄ eche of them goth to his osterye
And̄ took his loggynḡ as it Wold̄ falle
That on of hem Was loggid̄ in a stalle
Ferre in the yerde With oxen of the plowh
That othir man Was loggid̄ Wel ynowh
As Was his auenture or his fortune
That vs gouernyth al as in comune
And̄ so it be fyl longe or it Were day
This man mette in his bed̄ there that he lay
That his felowh gan to hym calle

And sayde allas for in an oxes stalle
This nyght shal I be murdrid there I ly
Now help me dere brother or I dy
In alle haste com to me he sayde
This man out of his slepe for feer abreyde
And whanne he was wakid of his slepe
He turned hym and took of this no kepe
Hym thoughte his dreme was but a vanyte
Thus thwyse in his slepe dremyd he
And atte thridde tyme yet his felaw
Cam as hym thoughte & sayde I am now slawe
Behold my blody woundis depe and wyde
Aryse vp erly in the morow tyde
And atte west gate of the town quod he
A cartful of dung there shalt thou se
In whiche my body is hid ful pryuely
Do that carte areste boldely
My goldy causid my deth soth to sayn
And tolde hym euery poynt how he was slayn
With a ful pitous face pale of helwe
And trust wel his dreme he fond right trewe
For on the morow as sone as it was day
To his felowis yn he took the way
And whenne that he cam to the oxis stalle
After his felow he gan to calle
The Osteler answerd hym anon
And sayde sire your felow is goon
As sone as day he went out of the town
This man gan fallyn in suspessioun

Remembrynge of his dremys that he mette
And forth he goth no lengir Wolde he lette
Unto the Westgate of the toun and fond
A dong carte as it were to donge londe
That Was arayd in the same Wyse
As ye haue herd the sely man deuyse
And With hardy herte he gan to crye
Vemaunce and Justice of this felonye
My felow murdrid is this same nyght
And in this carte he lieth gappynge Up right
I crye out on the mynistres quod he
That sholde kepe and reule this cyte
Hawle allas here lieth my felow slayn
What sholde y more of this tale sayn
The pepyl out sterte & cast the carte to grounde
And in the mydel of the dong they fonde
The sely man that murdrid Was al nelbe
O blessful god that art so good and trelbe
Lo holy that thilke belbreyest murdir albey
Murdir Wol out that se We day be day
Murdir is so Waltsom and abhominabyl
To god that Just is and resonable
That he ne Wol it suffre belyd to be
Though it abyde a day or tlbo or thre
Murdir Wol out this is my conclusion
And right anon the mynystris of the toun
Haue hent the carter & so sore hym pyned
And eke the Osteler so sore engyned
That they beknelb hir Wickydnesse anon

And Weren ay hangid be the necke boon
Here may ye se that dremys ben to drede
And certis in the same lif I rede
Right in the nexte chapitre aftir this
I gab not so haue I ioye and blis
Two men that Wolde haue passid ouer the se
For certayn causis in to a fer contre
Yf the Wynd ne hadde be contrarye
That made hem in a cyte to tarye
That stood ful mery vp on an hauen syde
But on a day ayens an euyn tyde
The Wynd gan chaunge & blew as hym lyst
Joly and glad they Wenten to rest
And cast hem ful erly forto sayle
But herkyn to that on may fil a greet meruayle
The on of hem slepinge as he lay
He mette a Wonder dreme agayn the day
Hym thoughte a man stood by his beddis syde
And hym comaundid that he sholde abyde
And sayde hym thus yf thou to morwe Wende
Thou shalt be dreynt my tale is at an ende
He Wook and tolde his felow What he mette
And prayde hym his viage forto lette
As for that day he prayde hym forto abyde
His felow that lay be his beddis syde
Gan forto lawhe and scornyd hym ful faste
No dreme quod he may do my herte agaste
That I Wol lette forto so my thingis
I set nat a strawe for thy dremyngis

For ſweuenys be but fantees and Japes
Men metyn alday of olblis and of apes
And of many amaſe therwith al
And dremyn of thingꝫ that neuir was ne ſchal
But ſithꝫ I ſe that thou wolt here abyde
And thus ſouthen wilfully thy tyde
God woot it rewith me and haue goodꝫ day
And thus he took his leue & wente his way
But er he hadde half his cours yſayledꝫ
I not why ne what myſchaunce it aylydꝫ
But caſuelly the ſchippis botom to rent
And ſchip and may vnder the watir it went
In ſighte of othir ſchippis beſyde
That with hym sayledꝫ atte ſame tyde
And therfore faire Pertelot ſo dere
By enſamplis olde maiſt thou here
That noman ſholde be to recheles
Of dremys forI ſay the nontles
That many a dreme ful ſore is forto drede
Lo in the lyf of ſaint Kenelme I rede
That was Kenulphus ſone the nobil kyngꝫ
Of mercurik holb kenelme mette a thingꝫ
A litil or he were mordridꝫ on aday
His mordir in his viſion he ſay
His norice hym expounedꝫ it euerideꝛ
His ſweuyn and bad hym kepe hym wel
Fro treſon but he was but .vij. yeer oldꝫ
And therfore litil tale he hath therof toldꝫ
Of ony dreme ſo holy was his herte

*

desunt nonnulla

Be god I hade leuyr than my sherte
That ye hade herdy his legendy as haue I
Dame Pertelot I say to yow trewly
Macrobius that Writith the visioun
In his book of the dremes of scipioun
Affermyth dremys andy saith that they seen
Warnyngy of thingis that We aftir seen
Andy ferthermore I pray yow lokith Wel
In the olde testament of daniel
Yf he heldy dremys ony Ioúnte
Rede eke of Joseph andy there shul ye se
Wondris bey som tyme but I say not al
Warnyngy of thingis that shul aftir fal
Lo of Egipt the kyngy that hight Pharao
His baker andy eke his boteler also
Whether they felt noy effect in dremys
Who so Wol seke actis of sondry remys
May rede of dremys a Wondir thingy
Lo Cresus Whiche Was of lide kyngy
Mette he not that he sat vp oy a tre
Which signifiedy he sholde hangidy be
Lo Andromeda Hectors Wif
That day that Hector sholde lese his lif
She dremydy in the same nyght beforn
How that the lif of Hector sholdy be lorn
Yf that day he Wente vy to bataille
She Warnedy hym but it might not auayle
He Wente forto fighte natheles
But he Was slayn anone of Achilles

But that tale is to longe to telle
And eek it is nygh day I may not dwelle
Shortly I say as for conclusion
That I shal haue of this auision
Aduersite and I say furthermore
That I ne telle of layatiuis no store
For they be tenemous I woot it weel
I hem diffye I loue hem neuyr adeel
But nolw lete vs speke of mirthe & stynt al this
Madame Pertelot so haue I blis
Of o thing god hath me sent large grace
For when I see the beaute of your face
Ye be so skarlet reed about your yen
It maketh al my drede for to dien
For also sikir as in principio
Mulier est hominis confusio
Madame the sentence of this latyn is
Woman is mannys Joie and his blis
For when I fele an nyght your softe syde
Al be it that y may not on you ryde
For that our perche is made so narow allas
I am so ful of ioye and of solas
That y diffye bothe sweuene and dreme
And with that word he fley doun fro the breem
For it was day and eek his hennys alle
And with a chuk he gan hem doun calle
For he had founde a corn lay in the yerde
Ryal he was and nomore a ferde
He federyd Pertelot twenty tyme

And trade as ofte or it was pryme
He lokith as he were a grym lioun
And on his toos he romedy vp an doun
Hym deynedy not to sette his feet to grounde
Ay he chuckidy whenne he hadde a corn̄ y founde
And to hym thamme ran his vyuys alle
As ryal as a prince in his halle
Leue I this chauntecleer in his pasture
And aftir wol I telle of his auenture
Whan the moneth in the whiche the worlde began
That highte march that god first made man
Was complet and passidy were also
Sith marche began thritty dayes and two
Befil that chauntecleer in al his pryde
His seuyn vyuys walkyngh hym beside
Cast vp his yen to the bright̄ sonne
That in the signe of taurus was I ronne
Twenty degrees & oon and sumwhat more
He knew be kynde and be non other lore
That it was pryme & crew with a blisful steuyn
The sonne he sayde is clombe vp to heuyn
Fourty degrees & one & sumwhat more I wys
Madame Pertelote my worldis blis
Harkyn how this blisful briddis synge
And se the fresh flouris how they sprynge
Ful is myn herte of reuel and solas
But sodenly hym fil a sorouful caas
For euer the latter ende of ioye is woo
And comynly ofter tyme it fallith so

And̄y if a wethour coude faire endite
He in a cronycle myghte fauely wryte
As for a souereyn notabilyte
Wolde euery wyseman herkyn to me
This story is al so trewe I vndertake
As is the book of launcelot delake
That wommen holden in ful gret reuerence
Wolde wol I turne ayen to my sentence
Wool for ful of sleyghte andy iniquite
That in the grene hadde woned yeris thre
Be high ymaginacion aforē cast
The same nyght thorough the hegge brast
Into the yerd there chauntecleer the faire
Was wont and eke his wyues to repaire
And̄y in a bed̄y of wortis stille he lay
Tyl it was passid̄y vndren of the day
Waytinge his tyme on chauntecleer to falle
As gladly doon thise homicides alle
That in a wayte ligge to murdre men
A fals murdrour ruckyngh in thy den
O nelle Scariot andy nelle Genylioū
Fals dissimilour o greek Synoū
That broughtist troye vttirly to sorwe
O chauntecleer acursid̄y be the morwe
That thou in thy yerde fley fro the bemys
Thow were ful wel warnyd̄y be thy dremys
That ilke day was perilous to the
But that god̄y afore woot muste nedis be
After the oppinion of certeyn clerkis

Witnes of hym that ony clerk is
That in ſcole is gret altercacion
In this mater andy gret diſputacion
Andy hath ley of ay hundrid thouſandy men
But I ne can not bulte out the bren
As can the holy doctour Auſtyn
Or boece or the biſſhop Bradwardyn
Whethir that goddis wil afore wetynge
Streynyth me needles to do a thing
Nedly clepe I ſimpyl neceſſite
Or yf the fre choys be grauntyd me
To do that ſame thing or do it nought
Though ody forwoot it or it was wrought
Or yf his witynge ſtreyneth neuyr a deel
But by neceſſite condicionel
I wol not haue to doñ of ſuche matere
My tale is of a cok as ye ſchul here
That took his counceyl of his wif with ſorwe
To walke in the yerde vp on the morwe
That he hadde met the dreme as I you tolde
Womemys counceyllis be ful ofte colde
Womannys counceyl broughte vs firſt to woo
Andy made adam fro paradis to go
There as he was ful mery andy wel at eſe
But for I not whom I mighte diſpleſe
Yf I counceyl of wommen wolde blame
Paſſe ouer I ſayde it in my game
Redith auctours where they trete of ſuche matere
Andy what they ſay of wommen ye mowe here

These ben the wokkis wordis and not myn
I can no harm of no wommay deuyne
Faire in the sonde to bathe hir merily
Lith Pertelot and alle hir susteris by
Ayens ye some and chauntecleer so free
Sangy merier than the marmayde in the see
For Phisalogus sayth certinly
How that they syngen wel and merily
And so be fil as he cast his ye
Among the wortis on a boterflye
He was waar of this fox that lay ful lowe
No thingy than lust hym forto crowe
But cryde anon cok cok and vp he stert
As may that was affrayd in his hert
For naturelly a best desirith to fle
Fro his contrary yf he may it se
Though he neuyr had seyn it erst with his ye
This chauntecleer whan he gan hym aspye
He wolde haue fledy but that the fox anon
Sayde gentyl sire allas what wyl ye don
Be ye affraidy of me that am your frende
Certis sire than be ye vnkyndy
If I to you wolde harm or vilonye
I am not comyn your counseyl to aspye
But trewly the cause of my comynge
Was only to here how ye syngy
For trewly ye haue as mery a steuyn
As ony aungel hath that is in heuyn
Therwith ye haue of musik more felynge

Than hadde kyng ryon of ony that can ſyngh
My lordy your fadir godyh his ſoule blis
Andy eke your moder of her gentilnes
Haue im my hous be ful wel at eſe
Andy certes ſire fayne wolde I you pleſe
But for mey ſpeke of ſyngynch I wolde ſey
So moot I brolbkyn myn yey tbey
Saue you ne herdy I neuer may ſo ſynge
As didy your fader in the mornynge
Certis it was of herte al that he ſongh
Andy forto make his kyng the more ſtrongh
He wolde ſo peyne hym that with bothe his yeñ
He muſte wynke ſo lolde he muſte cryeñ
Andy ſtondyn on his tiptoos therwith all
Andy ſtreche forth his necke longh andy ſmal
Andy eek he was of ſuche diſcreciõ
That ther was noman in no regiõ
That hym in ſongh or wiſdom mighte paſſe
I haue wel redy dan burnel the aſſe
Amongh his fers ther was a cok
For a preſtis ſone yaf hym a knok
Up on is leggis while he was yongh & nyce
He made hym forto leſe his benefice
But ther is no comparíſoñ
Betwix the wiſdom andy diſcreciõn
Of your fadir andy of his ſubtilyte
Now ſyngith ſire for ſaint charite
Lete ſe can ye your fadir countirfete
This chauntecleer his wyngis gan bete

As may that coude nat his reſon aſpye
So Was he rauyſſhed With his flaterye
Allas ye lordis many a fals flaterour
Is in your court and meny a fals loſingour
That pleſe you more be my feith
Than he that ſothfaſtnes vnto you ſaith
Redith ecclesiaſt of flaterye
Be Waar ye lordis of her trecherye
This chauntecleer ſtood hye vp on his toos
Strechyng his necke and held his yen cloos
And gan to crolbe lolbde for the nonys
And dan ruſſell ſtart vp at onys
And by the gorge hente chauntecleer
And on his bak toWard the Wode hym beer
For yet Was ther noman that hym ſued
O deſtene that maiſt not be eſchued
Allas that chauntecleer fley fro the bemys
Allas his Wyf raught not of dremys
And on a friday fil al this myſchaunce
O venus that art god of pleſaunce
Sithnes that thy ſeruaūt Was this chauntecleer
And in thy ſeruiſe dide al his poWer
More for delite than the Worlde to multiplye
Why Woldiſt thou ſuffre hym on thy day to dye
O Gaufryde dere maiſtir ſouereyn
That Whan the Worthy kyng Richard Was pleyn
With ſhot complemediſt his deth ſo ſore
Why ne hadde Inoll thy ſentence & thy lore
The friday forto chilben as diden ye

For on a friday ſhortly ſlayn was he
Thamme wolde I ſhewe you holw that I coude pleyn
For chaunteccleer andy for his peyn
Certis ſuche crye ne lamentacion
Nas of ladies maady whenne Ilion was wonne
Andy pirrus with his bright ſwerdy
Whey he ſlent kyngy Pryamy be the herdy
Andy ſlolw hym as ſaith Eneydos
As maden alle the hennys in the cloos
Whenne that they hadde of chaunteeler the ſight
But ſouerenly dame Pertelot gan to ſhright
Ful lowder than didy hasdrubalis wif
Whenne that her huſbondy hady loſt his lif
Andy that the romayns hady brent Cartage
She was ſo ful of turment andy of rage
That wilfully in to the fire ſhe ſtert
Andy brende her ſelf with a ſtedfaſt hert
O woful hennys ſo that cryden ye
As whenne that Nero brent the cyte
Of Rome criden the Senatouris wyuys
For that her huſbondis ſholde leſe her liuys
Withoutyn gilt Nero hath hem ſleyn
Nolw wol I turne to my tale agayn
This ſely widowe andy hir doughtris two
Herdey the hennys crye andy make woo
Andy out at the dore ſtert they anone
Andy ſalw the fox towardy the wode goon
Andy baar vp on his bak the wolk alwey
Andy criden out andy harolw andy weylawey

A ha the fox and aftir hym they renne
And eek With staues meny othir memme
Ray wolle our dogge talbot and garlonde
And malkyn With her distaf in her honde
Ray wolle and eek the fery hoggis
For they so sore a ferdy were of the doggis
And shoutyng of men & of Wommen eek
They romme so her herte thoughte to breke
They yellyn as fendis doon in helle
The doggis criden as men Wolde hem quelle
Out of the hyuys com the swarm of bees
The gees for feer fley ouer the trees
So hidous Was the noyse a benedicite
Certis Jacke Straw ne his meyne
Ne made neuir shoutes half so shrille
Whan that they Wolde ony flemyngh kylle
As that day Was maad vp on the fox
Of bras they blew the trompes & of box
Of horn & boon in Whiche they powpyd
And therWith they shrikyd and shoutyd
It semed as though heuyn sholde falle
Now goodemen I pray you harkyn alle
Lo how fortune turnyth sodenly
The hope and the pryde of her enuy
This olk that laye vp on this foxis bak
In al his drede vnto the fox he spak
And sayde sire yf I were as ye
Yet sholde I say as Wis god help me
Turnyth ayeen ye proude cherlis alle

A strey pestilence vp on you falle
Nowe am I come vnto this wodis side
Magre your hedy the wolk shal here abyde
I wol hym ete in feith and that anon
The fox answerde in feith it shal be doon
And as he spak the word al sodenly
This wolk brak from his mouth deliuerly
And high vp on a tree he fly anon
And whenne the fox sawe that he was goon
Alas quod he o chauntecler alas
I haue do to you gret trespas
In as muche as I made you a ferde
Whenne I you hente & brought out of your yerde
But syre I did hit not in no wickid entent
Com down & I shal telle you what I ment
I shal you say soth so god helpe me so
May thamme quod he I shrewe vs bothe two
And first I shrewe my self bothe blood & bonys
Yf thou begyle me ofter thamme onys
Thou shalt nomore with thy flaterye
Do me synge with a wynkyng ye
For he that wynketh whanne he sholde se
As wisly god lete hym neuyr the
May quod the fox god yeue hym myschaunce
That is so indiscrete of gouernaunce
That iangelith whey that he sholde haue pees
Lo suche it is for to be recheles
And negligent and truste on flaterye
But ye that holdyn this tale a folye

As of a fox and of a cok and an hen
Takith the moralite gode men
For saint Poule saith al that Writyn is
To our doctryne is Writyn y wis
Takith the fruyt & leet the chaf be stille
Now gode men yf that it be your Wille
As seith my lorde so make vs alle goody men
And bringe vs to his high blisse amen
Here begynneth the Maunciples prologe.
Woot ye not where ther stondith a litil toun
Which that is clepid bob vp and doun
Under the blee in Cauntirbery Wey
There gan our oste to iape and to pley
And sayde sires What doy is in the myre
Is ther noman for praier ne for hire
That Wol awake our felaw behynde
A thef mighte hym ful lightly robbe & bynde
See how he nappeth se for cokkis bonys
How he Wol falle from his hors attonys
Is that a cook of londoy With myschaunce
Do hym comfort he knoweth his penaunce
For he shal telle a tale be my fey
Al though it be not Worth a botel hey
Awake thou cook qd he god yeue the sorow
What eylith the to slepe be the morow
Hast thow had fleey al night or art thou dronk
Or hast thou al night With som quene y swonke
So that thow maist not holde vp thy hed
This cook that Was ful pale & no thing reed

Sayde our hooſt ſo godʒ my ſoule blis
Ther is falle oʒ me greet henynes
Not J nat Why, me were leuer to ſlepe
Than the beſt galoʒ of Wyne in chepe
Wel quodʒ the Mauncipyl yf it may do the eſe
To the ſir cook andʒ to no Wight diſpleſe
Whiche that here ridenʒ in this company
Andʒ that our hooſt Wil of his curteſy
J Wol as nowe excuſe the of thy tale
For in goodʒ feith thy viſage is ful pale
Thyn yen daſowen ſothly as me thinkith
Andʒ Wel J Woot thy breth ful foule ſtynketh
That ſhewith Wel thou art not Wel diſpoſidʒ
Of me certeyn thou ſhalt not be gloſidʒ
Se howe he galpith lo this dronkyn Wight
As though he Wolde ſWelle anoʒ right
Holdʒ cloos thy mouth be thy fader kyn
The deuyl of helle ſette his foot ther yn
Thy curſidʒ breth enfectith vs alle
Fy ſtynkyng ſWyn foule moot the befalle
Takith hede ſires of this luſty man
Nowe ſWete ſire Wol ye iuſte atte Ran
Therto me thinkith ye be Wel y ſhape
J trowe that ye haue dronkyn Wyn of ape
Andʒ that is Whenʒ menʒ pleyen atte ſtrawe
Andʒ With his ſpeche the cook Wexidʒ al Wraw
Andʒ oʒ the Mauncipyl he gan to nodde faſte
For lak of ſpeche adoun the hors hym caſte
Where as he lay til that menʒ hym vp took

This was a feir cheuesaunce of a wolk
Alas that he ne had holde hym be his ladyl
And er that he ayen were in his sadyl
Ther was a gret schouyng bothe to and fro
To lifte hym vp and mykyl care and woo
So vnweldy was this sely pallyd gost
And to the maundpyl thay spak our ost
Be cause that drynke hath dominacion
Op on this man be my sauacion
I trow lewdly wil he telle his tale
For were it wyne or oldy moisty ale
That he hath dronkyn he spekith so in his nose
And fuesith faste and eke he hath the pose
He hath also to do more than ynough
To kepe hym on his Capyl out of the slough
And if he falle from his Capil eft sone
Thay schul we alle haue ynough to done
In liftyng vp his dronkyn corps
Tel on thy tale of hym y make I nofors
But yet maundpyl in feyth thou art to nyce
Thus oppynly to reproue hym of his vice
Another day he wyl pauenture
Reclayme the and brynge the to lure
I mene he speke wol of smale thingis
And forto pynche at thy rekenyngis
That were not honest yf it cam to the preef
Noqdy the Maundpil that were a gret myschief
So mighte he brynge me in to the snare
Yet hadde y leuer paye for the mare

Whiche he ridith on than he shulde with me stryue
I wol not wrath hym so mote I thryue
That I spak I sayde it but in bourde
And wite ye wel I haue here in my gourde
A draughte of wyne ye of a rype grape
And right anone ye shul se a goody Jape
This cook shal drynke therof yf I may
Up on my lif he wol not say nay
And certenly to tellen as it was
Of this vessel the cook dranke faste alas
What nedith it he dranke ynough beforn
And when he hadde poupid in his horn
To the maunciple he took the gourde agayn
And of the drynke the cook was ful fayn
And thankid hym in suche wyse as he coude
Than gan our ost to laughe wonder loude
And sayde I se wel it is necessary
Where p we goon goody drynke with vs to cary
For that wol turne rancour and disese
To accorde and loue & many a wordy to pese
O bacus blissid be thy name
That so canst turne ernest in to game
Worship and thank be to thy deyte
Of that mater ye get nomore of me
Tel on thy tale thou maunciple I the prey
Wel sire quod he herkenyth what I say

¶ Here endith the Mauncíplis prologe.
¶ And begynnyth his tale.

THey Phebus dwellid her in erthe a doun

As olde bokis makeyn mencion
He Was the most lusty bacheler
Of al the Worlde andy eke the beste archer
He slough Phetoy the serpent as he lay
Slepyngy ayens the some vp oy a day
Andy many anothir nobil dede
He With his bolde Wrought as meyn molde rede
Pleye he coude oy euery mynstralcye
Andy syngeyn that it Was a melodye
To here of his cleer bois the soun
Certes the kyngy of Thebes amphion
That With his songy Wallidy the cyte
Coude neuer synge half so Wel as he
Therto he Was the semeliest may
That is or Was sith the Worlde begay
What nedith it his feture forto discryue
For in this Worlde Was ther noy so fair a liue
He Was therWith fulfillidy of gentilnesse
Of honour andy of parfyt Worthynesse
This Phebus that Was flour of bachelerye
As Wel in fredom as in chiualrye
For disporte in signe eek of victorye
Of Phetoy so as tellith vs the storye
Was Wont to bere in his hondy abolde
Nolde hadde this Phebus in his hous a crolde
With ynne a cage y fostridy many a day
Andy taughte it spekte as meyn teche a Jay
Whit Was this crolde as is a snolde Whit swan
Andy countirfetidy the speche of euery man

He coude whan he sholde telle a tale
Ther was in al this worlde non nyghtyngale
Ne coude be ay hundrid thousandy deel
Synge so wonderly merily and weel
Nolle hadde this phebus in his hous a wyf
Whiche that he louedy more than his lif
Andy nyght andy day didy euer his diligence
Here forto plese andy do her reuerence
Saue only the soth yf I shal sayn
Jelous he was andy wolde haue kept her feyn
For hym were loth iapidy forto be
Andy so is euery wight in suche degre
But al for nought for it auayliddy nought
A goody wyf that is cleen of werk andy thought
Sholde not be kept in noy albe certeyn
Andy trewly the more it is in feyn
To kepe a shrewe for it wol nat be
This holde I for a very nycete
To spille labour forto kepe wyuys
Thus writen olde clerkis in her lyuys
But nolle to purpos as I first began
This worthy phebus doth al that he can
To plesen her wenyngy thorolle suche plesaunce
Andy for his manhoody & for his gouernaunce
That noman sholde put hym from hir grace
But godi it woot ther may noman enbrace
As to distreyne a thingy whiche that nature
Hath naturelly set in a creature
Take ony bridy andy put hym in a Cage

And do al thyn entent and thy corage
To fostre it tenderly With mete and drynke
Of alle deyntees that thou canst bethinke
And kepe it al so clenly as thou may
Al though his cage of goldy be neuer so gay
Yet hath this brid by twenty thousand fold
Leuer in a forest that is Wilde and old
Go ete Wormys and suche Wreachidnes
For euer this brid Wol do his besynes
To ascape out of his cage Whan he may
His liberte the brid desirith ay
Leet take a cat and fostre hir With mylk
And tender flesh and make her couche of silk
And leet her se a mous go by the Wal
Anon she Weyuith flesh and couche and al
And euery deynte that is in that hous
Suche appetit hath she to ete the mous
Lo here hath lust his dompnacion
And appetit flemyth discrecion
As the Wolf hath also a vilens kynde
The lelwdist Wolf that she may fynde
Or leest of reputacion that Wol she take
In tyme Whan her lust to haue a make
Alle thyse ensamplis speke I be thyse men
That been vntrewe and no thing by Women
For men haue euer a licorous appetit
On lolber thing to pfourme her delit
Than on her Wyuys be they neuer so feir
Ne neuer so trewe ne so debonéir

Flesh is so nelwfangil With myschaunce
That We ne komme in no thmgy haue plesaunce
That sounyth vnto vertu ony Whyle
Thus Phebus Whiche thoughte no gyle
Disceyuedy Was for al his iolyte
For vnder hym another hady she
A man of litil reputacion
Not Worth to hym in no comparison
The more harm is it happith ofte so
Of Whiche ther comyth muche harm andy Woo
Andy so wefyl When Phebus Was absent
His Wyf anon hath for her lemmany sent
Her lemmany certis that is a knauysshe speche
Forcyne it me that I you beseche
The Wyse Plato saith as ye nolwe rede
The Wordy muste nede accorde With the dede
Yf mey shul telle propirly a thingy
The Wordy muste cosyn be to the Workynge
I am a boistous man right thus say I
Ther is but litil difference trewly
Betwix a Wyf that is of high degre
Yf of her body dishoneste she be
Andy a pore Wenche other than this
Yf it so be they Worke bothe amys
But that the gentil is in staat aboue
She shal be clepidy his lady andy his loue
Andy for that other is a polwer Womany
She shal be clepidy his Wenche or his lemmany
Andy godi it Woot myn olwen dere brother

Mey leye as lowe that oy as that othir
Right so betwix ay opey teraunt
And ay out lawe or a theef erraunt
The same J say ther is no differeence
To Alisaundir was told this sentence
That for the tiraunt is of gretter might
Before of meyne to sle ouy right
And breme hous & hoom & make al pleyn
Lo therfore is he clepid a capteyn
And for the outlawe hath but smal meyne
And may not do so gret harm as he
Ne bryngе a contre to so greet myschief
Mey clepe hym ay outlawe or a theef
But for J am a may not teptuel
J wol not of this trete neuer a deel
J wol go to my tale as J began
Whan Phebus wyf had sent for her lemman
Anon they wroughten alle their lust volage
This whyte crowe that hyng ay in the cage
Beheld her work and sayde neuer a worde
And whan hoom was come Phebus the lordy
This crowe song cuckow cuckow
What bridy quod Phebus what syngist thow
Ne were thou not wont so merily to synge
That to my hert it was a reioysing
To here this vois allas what song is this
Be gody quod he y synge not amys
Phebus quod he for al thy worthynes
For al thy beaute and thy gentilnes

For al thy song and thy mynstralcye
For al thy Waytyng bleryd is thyn ye
With one of litil reputacion
Not Worth to the in no comparison
The mountaunce of a gnat so moot I thryue
For on thy bed thy Wyf I saw hym swyue
What Wol ye moze the colbe anon hym tolde
By sad tokenys and by Wordis bolde
How that his Wyf hadde don her lecherye
Hym to gret shame and to gret vilonye
And tolde hym eft he saw it With his yen
This Phebus gan a Weyward forto prien
Hym thoughte his herte brest a two
His bowe he bent and set ther ynne a flo
And in his Ire he hath his Wyf slayn
This is the effect ther is nomoze to sayn
For sowth he brak his mynstralsie
Bothe harpe and lute/geterne and salbtrie
And eek he brak his arwis and his bowe
And aftir that thus spak he to the crowe
Traitour quod he With tunge of scorpion
Thou hast me brought to my confusion
Alas that I Was Wrought Why nere I ded
O dere Wyf O gemme of lusty bed
That Were to me so sad and eek so trewe
Now liest thou ded With face pale of hewe
Ful giltlees that durste I swere iWys
O rakyl hond to do so foule amys
O trowbil Wit O Ire recheles

That vnauysidy symmyst giltlees
O vantrust ful of suspecion
Where was thy wit andy thy discrecion
O euery may be waar of vekilnes
Me troth no thingy without witnes
Smyt not to sone or thou wite why
Andy be auysidy wel andy sikirly
Or ye do ony execucion
Vp on your ire for suspecion
Allas a thousandy folk haue vekil ire
Fully forwoon z brought hem in the myre
Allas for sorowb I wil my self sle
Andy to the crowe o false theef sayde he
I wol quyte anon thy fals tale
Thou songy whylom lik an nyghtyngale
Nowb shalt thou fals theef thy songy forgoon
Eke thy whyte fetheris euerichon
Me neuer in al thy lif shalt thou speke
Thus shulle meny on a treytour be a wreke
Thu andy thyn offspringy euer shul be blake
Me neuer swete noyse shul ye make
But euer crye ayens tempest andy rayn
In tokyn that thorou the my wif is sleyn
Andy to the crowe he stert andy that anone
Andy pullidy of his whit fetheris euerichon
Andy made hym blak andy reft hym al his songy
Andy eke his speche z out atte doze hym slongy
Vnto the deuyl whiche I hym betake
Andy for this caas be alle crowis blake

Lordingis by this ensampyl I wol you pray
Welwar andy take kepe what I say
Ne tellith neuer noman in your lif
Holde that anothir may hath dight his wyf
He wyl you haten mortally certeyn
Salamon as wyse clerkis sayn
Techith a man to kepe his tunge wel
But natheles thus taughte me my dame
My sone think on the crolde a goddis name
My sone keep wel thy tunge andy kep thy frendy
A wickidy tunge is worse than a fendy
My sone from a fendy men may hem blisse
My sone gody of his endles godnesse
Wallidy a tonge with teth andy lippis eek
For man sholde hym auyse what he speek
My sone ful ofte forto mykyl speche
Hath many a man be spilt as clerkis teche
But for litil speche spoken auysedly
Is noman shent to speke generally
My sone thy tonge sholdist thou restreyne
At al tyme but whan thou dost thy peyne
To speke of godi in honour here
The firste vertu sone yf thou wolt lere
Is to restreyne andy kepe wel thy tunge
Thus lerne childryn whyn they be yongy
My sone of mykyl spekyngy vn auysidy
There lasse spekyngy hadde I nolde sufficidy
Comyth mykyl harm thus was me taught
In mykyl speche synne wantith nought

Woſt thou Wherfore a Pakil tonge ſeruith
Right as a ſWerdy for auttith andy forkeruith
An arny a tWo my dere ſone right ſo
A tonge auttith frendſhip al a tWo
A Jangelar is to gody abhominabil
Rede Salamon ſo Wyſe andy honourabil
Rede Dauid andy his pſalmys rede Seneke
My ſone ſpek not ne With thy bedy thou beke
Diſſimyl as thou Were deef yf that thou here
The Jangelour ſpekith of parlous matere
The flemyngy ſaith lerne yf that thou liſt
That ſtil Jangelyngy cauſith muche reſt
My ſone yf thou no Wickidy Wordy haſt ſaidy
The dar not drede for to be by Wraidy
But he that hath myſſaidy J dar Wel ſayn
He may by no Way clepe his Wordy agayn
Thingy that is ſaidy / is ſaidy & forth it goth
Though hym repente or hym be neuer ſo loth
He is thralle to hym to Whom he hath ſaidy
A tale for Whiche he is noW euyl apaidy
My ſon beWaar andy be non auctor neWe
Of tidingis Whether they be fals or treWe
Where ſo thou come amongy hye or loWe
Kepe Wel thy tonge andy think on the roWe

Here endith the Mauncíplis tale.

Here begynneth the Parſonnys prologe

By that the Mauncípil hady his tale endidy
The ſonne fro the ſouth ſyde is deſcendidy
So loWe that hit Was to my ſight

Degrees of fyue andy tWenty of highte
Ten atte clocke it Was so as J gesse
For enleuyn foot a litil moze oz lesse
My shadoWe Was at that tyme as there
Of suche feet as my lengthe partidy Were
In. vj. feet equally of prop̃zcion
Ther With the monys epaltacion
J mene libza alWey gan ascende
As We Were entringy atte tolWnys ende
For Whiche our ost as he Was Wont to gye
As in this caas this ioly companye
Sayde in this Wyse lozdmgis euerichon̄
NoW lakkith vs no tale moze than on̄
Fulfillidy is my sentence andy my dede
Who Wol noW telle a tale let se
Almost fulfillidy is myn ordenaunce
J pray to godn so yeue hym right goody chaunce
That tellith this tale to vs lustely
Sire preest quod he art thou a vicary
Oz art thou a parson say soth be thy fey
Be What thou be breke not our pley
For euery man saue thou hath tolde his tale
Unbokil andy shew vs What is in thy male
For trewly me thynkith be thy chere
Thou sholdest knytte vp Wel a greet matere
Tel vs a fabil anon for oldis bonys
This parson answerde al attonys
Thou getist fabil non tolde for me
For poule that Writith to Timothe

Repreueth hem that weyuen sothfastnesse
And techyn fables and suche wrecchidnesse
Why sholde I sowe draf out of my fist
Whan I may sowe whete yf me list
For whiche I say yf that thou list to here
Moralite and of vertuous matere
And than yf ye wol yeue me audience
I wolde ful fayn at cristis reuerence
Done you plesaunce leefful as I can
But trustith wel I am a sothseyn man
I can nat geste rum ram ruf by lettir
And gody woot ryme holde I but litil bettir
And therfore yf ye lust I wol nat glose
I wol you telle a mery tale in prose
To knet vp al this fest and make an ende
And Jhesu for his grace wit me sende
To shewe you the wey in this viage
Of that ilke parfyt glorious pilgremage
That highte Jerusalem celestial
And yf ye voucheseuf anone I shal
Begynne vp on my tale for whiche I preye
Tel your auys I can no better seye
But nathyles this meditacion
I put it ay vnder correction
Of clerkis for I am not textuel
I take but the sentence trustith weel
Therfore I make protestacion
That I wol stonde to correction
Vp on this wordy we haue assentid sone

For as it semedy it Was forto done
To endey im som vertuous sentence
And forto yeue hym place andy audience
And bady to our oste he sholde to hym sey
That alle We to telle his tale hym preye
Our oste hadde the Wordis for bs alle
Sir preest quod he nolb fair moot you befalle
Saith What ye list andy We shul gladly here
And With that Wordy he sayde im this maneve
Tellith quod he your meditacion
But hastith you the some Wol a doun
Beth fructuous andy that im litil space
And to do Wel gody sende you his grace
Here endith the Parsons prology.
And here begymneth his tale.

OUr swete lordy gody of heuene that noman Wil perisshe but Wil that We comen alle to the knoWlechimgy of him andy to the blisful lyf that is pardurable Amonesheth bs by the prophete Jeremye that saith im this Wyse/Stondeth vpon the Weyes/And see andy aske ye of olde pathis That is to seye of olde sentencis Whiche is goody Weye/And Walketh im that Weye And that is refresshyngy for your solblis/Many bey the Weyes spirituel that leden folk to our lordy Jhesu Crist And to the regne of glorye/Of Whiche Weyes/ther is a ful noble Weye andy Wel couenable Whiche may not faylle to many ne to Woman that thurgh synne hath mysgoon fro the right Weye of Jherusalem celestial/And this Wey is clepedy pentence/Of Whiche man sholde gladly herkne andy enquyre Wyth al his herte to Wete/What is

penytence or penaunce / And wyte whens it is clepedy penytence / And holde many maners key the actions of worchyngh of penytence / And holde many spyces ther be of pemitence / And whiche thynges behouen and apperteyney to penytence / Saint Ambrose saith that penytence is the pleynyngh of the may for the gilt that he hath do / And nomore to do ony thynge for the whyche hym ought to pleyne / And som doctor saith / that penaunce is the waymentingh of may that soroweth for his synne And pyneth hym self for he hath mysdon / Penytence with certayn circumstaunce is verray repentance of may that holdeeth hym self in sorowe and other peyne for his giltes / And for he shal be verray pemitent / He shal first bewayley the synnes that he hath don / And stedfastly purpose in his herte to haue shrifte of mouth / And to do satysfactyon and neuer for to do thyngh for whyche hym ought more to bewayle or complayne / And to contynue in goody werkes / or ellis his repentance may not auayle / For as saith saint Ysodre He is a Japar and a gabber and not verray repentant / that eftsones doth thingh for whiche hym oweth to repente ne stynte to do synne / may not auaylle / But natheles men shold take hope that at euery tyme that men falleth be it neuer so ofte that he may arise thurgh penytence yf he haue grace But certainly it is grete doubte /+ For as seyth saint Gregore / whoso ariseth he out of his synne / that is chargedy of euyl vsage + And therfore repentaunte folk that stynte for to synne and for to lete synne or synne forlete hem / Holy chirche holdeth hem syker of her saluacyon + /

And he that ſymmeth and truly repentith hym in his laſte
Holy chirche hopith his ſaluacõn by the grete mercy of our
lord Jheſu Criſt for his repentaunce/but take ye the ſiker
and certayn waye +/ And now ſith I haue declared you
what thyngꝫ is penaunce / Now ſchul ye vnderſtande that
ther be thre actions/the firſt is that a man be baptiſed after
that he hath ſymmed ſaynt Auguſtyn ſaith but he be peny-
tent for his old ſynful lyf / he may not begynne the newe
clene lif/ For yf he be baptiſed without penitence for his
old gilt/he receyueth the marke of baptẽſme / but not the
grace ne the remiſſion of his ſymmys til he haue verray repen
taunce/Another defaute is that men done dedly ſymme after
they haue receyued baptẽſme/The thirde defaute is that men
falle in venyal ſymmes after her baptẽſme fro day to day /+
Therof ſaith ſaynt Auſtyn that penaunce of goody and
humble folk is the penytence of euery day/The ſpices of pe-
naunce ben thre/That one of hem is ſolempne/Another is
comune/And the thirde is pryue/That penaunce that is ſo
lempne is in two maners/as is to be put out of holy chirche
in lenton for ſlaughter of childrey & ſuche maner thinges /
Another is whan a man hath ſymmed openly / of whiche
ſymme the fame is openly knowen in the contre and therme
holy chirche by Jugement diſtreyneth hym for to do open pe
nance/Some penaunce is that preſtes enioyne men comenly
in certayn caas as for to go parauenture nakedy on pilgre-
mage or barefoot/ Preuy penaunce is that men doon al day
for preuy ſymmes of whiche we ſchriuen vs priuely and re-
ceyuen pryue penaunce / Now ſchal thou vnderſtonde what
behoueth and is neceſſarye to euery preuy penitent/ And

these stonden in thre / Cõtricion of herte / Cõfession of mouth And satisfaction / For Whiche John Crisostom saith / Penytence distreyneth to accepte benygnely euery peyne that is hym enioyned With contricion of herte and shryfte of mouth With satisfaction & Worchyng of al maner humylite And this is fruytful penance ayenst tho thinges in Whiche We Wratthyn our lozd Jhesu Crist / This is to saye delyte in thinkyng / by rechelesnes in spekyng / by Wickedy and synful Wirchyng / Ayenst these Wickedy giltes is penance That may be likened to a tree. The rote of this tre is contricion that hydeth hym in the herte of hym that is veray penitente right as the rote of a tre hydeth hym in the erthe / Of the rote of contricyon spryngeth a stalke that bereth braunches and leuys of confession and fruyt of satisfaction Of Whiche crist saith in the gospel / Do ye digne fruyt of penytence / For by this fruyt men may knowe this tree and not by the Rote that is hyd in the herte of a man / Ner by the braunchis ne leeuys of confession / And therfore our lozd Jhesu Crist saith thus / by the fruyt of hem ye shal knowe hem / Of thys Rote spryngeth a seed of grace Whiche seed is moder of sikernes / And this seed is eger and hoot / the grace of this seed springeth of god thurgh the Remembraunce of the day of dome and of the peynes of helle / Of this mater Salamon saith that in the drede of god a man forlettith his synne / The hete of this seed is the loue of god and desiryng of the ioye perdurable / This hete drawbeth the herte of man to god and doth hym hate his synne / For ther is nothyng that sauoureth so sote to a child as the mylke of his norice / ne nothyng

is to hym moze abhominable than that mylk Whan it is med
lid with other mylk/Right so the synful man that loueth
his synne/hit semeth it is to hym most swete of ony thing
But fro that tyme that he loueth sadly our lozd Jhesu Crist
and desireth the lyf pardurable/ther is to hym no thyng
moze abhominable/ For soth the loue of god is the lawe of
god/ For Whiche dauid the prophete saith/ I haue loued thy
lawe and hated Wickednes/he that loueth god kepeth his
lawe and his Word/ This the prophete Damel Inspired
vpon the vision of Nabugodonosor Whan he counceilled hym
to do penaunce/Penaunce is of the tre of lyf to hem that it
receyuen/And he that holdeth hym very penitent is blessid
after the sentence of salamon/ In this Penitence or contri
cion may shal vnderstande foure thynges / that is to saye
What is contricion/And Whiche ben the causes that meuen
a man to contricion/And how he shold be contryte/And
What contricon auayleth to the solle/Than is hit thus that
contricion is the very sowe that a man restreyneth in his
herte for his synnes With sad purpose to shryue hym and
to do penaunce & neuer moze to do synne / And this sowe
shal be in this maner as saith seynt Bernard/hit shal be
greuous and heuy and Wel sharp and poynaunt in herte
First for a man hath agilted his lozd and his creatour
And moze sharp and poynaunt for he hath agilted his
fader celestial / And yet moze sharp & poynant for he hath
Wrathid hym and agylte hym that bought hym that With
his precyous blood hath deliuerid hym from the bondes of
synne and fro the cruelte of the deuyll and fro the peynes
of helle/ These causes that meue a man to contricion ben. Vj.

¶ Furst may shal remembre hym of his symys / But
loke that remembraunce be to hym no delyte by no weye
but grete shame and sorow for his gylte ¶ For Job
sayth / Synful men doy werkis worthy of confusion /
And therfore sayth Ezechyel / I wyl remembre me
al the yeris of my lyf in bitternes of my herte ¶ And
god saith in the Apocalips / Remembre you fro whens
that ye befalle / For before the tyme that ye symned ye
were the childrey of god and lymys of the regne of
god ¶ But for your syme ye ley wapey thral and
foule membris of the fende. Hate of aungels / sklaundre
of holy chirche / and fody of the fals serpent / perpetuel
matier of the fyre of helle ¶ And that more foul and
abhominalle for ye trespace as oft tyme as doth the
houndy that bozneth agayn to ete his owen spuyng ¶
And yet fouler for your lenge contynuyng in syme
and your synfull vsage ¶ For whyche ye be voten in
your symys as a beest in his dungy / Suche maner
thoughtis maketh a man a shamed for his symys and
no delyte as saith the prophete Ezechiel ¶ Ye shul re-
membre you of your weyes / and they shal displese yow
Sothly symys ley the weyes that lede folk to helle ¶
¶ The secondy cause that ought to make a man haue des
daigh of syme is thys as sayth Saint Petir / Who so
doth syme is thrall to synne ¶ / And syme putteth a
man in grete thraldom ¶ And therfore saith the prophete
Ezechiel I wente sorowful and hady disdaigh of my
self / Certes wel ought a man haue disdaigne of synne
and withdrawe hym fro that thraldom and vilonye ¶

For lo What ſaith Seneca in this matr He ſaith thus ✣
Though I Wyſte that neyther godȳ ne may ſholdȳ neuer
knowe it / yet Wold I haue deſdaygñ for to do ſyme / ✣
Andȳ the ſame Seneca ſaith I am bozn to gretter thinges
thañ to be thralle to my body / Moze thralle may no man
ne Woman make of his body thañ yeue his body to ſyme ✣
Andȳ Were it the ſolbleſt chozle or the ſolbeſt Woman that
liueth andȳ leſt of Valeur / yet he is chargedȳ andȳ moſt foul
& moſt in ſeruitude euer fro the hyer degre that a man falleth
The moze is he thral andȳ moze to godȳ andȳ to the Wozldȳ
vile andȳ abhominable / O goodȳ god Wel ought a man haue
diſdeygne of ſyme ſith that thorugh that / there as he Was
fre nowe is he made bonde / Andȳ therfore ſaith ſaint Auſtyn
Yf thou haſt diſdayn of thy ſeruaunt / Yf he agilt or ſynne
Haue thou theȳ no diſdayn that thou thy ſelf ſhouldeſt do
ſynne / Take reward of thyn owhen Valeur / that thou ne be
to foul to thy ſelf ne to thyne / Allas Wel oughten they
that haue diſdayn to be ſeruauntes andȳ thralle to ſynne ✣
Sore to be a ſhamedȳ of hym ſelf / that godȳ of his endles
goodnes hath ſette in high aſtate or yeue hym ſtrength of
body / beaute / proſperyte / andȳ bought hym fro the deth With
his herte bloodȳ / that they ſo vnkyndely agaynſt his gen-
tylnes quyten hym ſo vilonſly to ſlaughter of her owhen
ſolblis ✣ O goodȳ godȳ ye Women that keen of grete beaute
remembre you on the Prouerbe of Salamon / he ſaith He
lykneth a fair Woman that is a fool of her body to a rynge
of goldȳ that is Wozn in the groyn of a Solbe ✣ For right
as a ſolbe Wroteth in euery ordure / ſo Wroteth ſhe her beaute
in ſtynkyngh ordure of ſyme / ¶ The thirde cauſe That

ought to meue a man to contrycion is drede of the day of dome / And the horrible paynes of helle ¶ For as saith saint Jherome / At euery tyme that I remembre of the day of dome / I quake for what I ete or drynke or doo what so I do / euer me semeth the trompe sowneth in myn eres / + Ryseth vp that ben dede and come ye to the Jugement + O good god muche ought a man to drede suche a Juge= ment ther as we shal be alle / As saith saint Paule / + Before the strayt Jugement of our lord Jhesu Crist / ¶ Where as we shal make a general cõgregacion / Where as no man may be absent / For certes ther auayleth non es= soyne ne none excusacion And not only that our falwes shal be Juged but eke oure werkes shal openly be knowen And that as saith seynt Bernard / There ne shal no pletyng auayle ne no sleyghte / We shal yeue rekenyng of euery ydle worde ¶ There shal we haue a Juge that may not be deceyued ne corrupt And why for certes al our thoughtes be discouerd as to hym ne for prayer ne for mede he wyl not be corrupt / And also he sayth The wrath of god wil not spare no wight for prayer ne for yeft / And therfore atte day of dome ther is none hope / Wherfore as sayth seynt Anselme Ful grete anguysh shal the synful folk haue at that tyme Where shal be the sterne e wroth Juge sittyng aboue / And vnder hym the horryble pyt of helle open to destroye hym that wolde not beknowen his synnys / Whiche synnes shulleh openly be shewd before god and euery creature / And on the lyft syde mo deuylles than the herte may thynke for to harye and drawe the synful soules to the pytte of helle +

And within the hertes of folk shal be the bityng conscience / and without forth shal his werkes accuse hym . Theme shal the wrecchid folle fle to hyde hym But certes he may not hyde hym he must come forth and shewe hym For certes as saith saint Jherome / the erthe shal caste him out of hym and the see also and the eyer also that shal be ful of thunder clappis and lightnyng / Now sothly who so wil remembre hym of these thynges I gesse that his symnes shal not torne hym to delite but to grete sorow for drede of the peyne of helle / And therfore saith Job to god Suffre lord that I may a while bewaile and bewepe or I go wetoznyng to the derk erthe and coueryd with derke / nes / the londe of miserye and of derknes where as is shadow of deth where as ther is none other ordenaunce but grisly drede that euer shal laste / Lo here may ye see that Job prayde respyte a while to bewepe & wayle his trespaas / For sothly one day to respyte is better than al the tresour of this world And for as muche as a man may acquyte hym self by fore god by penitence in this world and not by tresour / Ther fore sholde he pray to god to yeue hym respyte a while to be wepen & bewaylen his trespaas / For certes alle the sorow that a man myght make fro the begynnyng of the world nys but a litel thyng atte regarde of the sorow of helle / ¶ The cause why that Job clepeth the londe of derknes / vn / derstondeth that he clepeth hit londe or erthe / for it is stable and neuer shal fayle derkenes / For he that is in helle hath defaute of lyght naturel / ¶ For certes the derk lyght that shal come out of the fyre that euer shall bzenne shal torne hem al to peyne that be in helle / For it shewith hym alle the

horrible deuylles that hem tormente couerdy With the derk=
nes of deth that ben the ſynnes that the Wreachyd man
hath don / Whyche that deſtourben hym to ſee the face of
god / Right as a derk cloude betWene vs and the ſonne
Londe of myſeſe by cauſe that ther be thre defautes ayenſt
thre thynges that folk of this Worldy haue in this pre=
ſent lyf / that is to ſaye / honouris / delytes / and ry=
ches / Ayenſt honour haue they in helle ſhame and con=
fuſion / For Wel ye Wote they clepen honour the reuerence
that men don to men / but in helle is none honour ne Re
uerence / For certes nomore Reuerence ſhal be there to a
kynge than a knaue / For Whiche god ſaith by the pro=
phete Jheremye / The folk that me diſpyſen ſhalle be in
deſpyte / Honour is eke clepedy a grete lordſhyp / there
ſhal no Wight ſeruen other / but of harme and tormente
Honour is eke clepedy grete dignyte and highnes but
in helle ſhalle they alle be fortwedy With deuylles as god
ſaith / The horrible deuylles ſhulle goo and crepy vpon
hedes of dampnedy folk / And this is for as muche that
the hyer that they Were in this preſent lyf the more they
ſhul be abatedy and defolledy in helle / Ayenſt the riches
of thys Worldy / ſhal they haue myſeſe of pouerte / And
this pouerte ſhal be in .iiij. thynges Jn defaute of treſour
of Whiche Dauid ſaith / The riche folk that enbracen and
coueyten in al her herte ỹ riches of this Worldy ſhulle ſlepe
in the ſleppyng of deth / as nothing ſhul they fynde in
there hondes of alle her treſour / And more ouer the myſeſe
of helle ſhal be in defaute of mete and drynke. For god
ſaith thus by Moyſes / Ye ſhal be Wastedy With hunger .

And the birdes of helle shal deuoure hem With bitter deth.
And the galle of the dragon her morsellis. And ferther-
ouer her mysese shal be in defaute of clothing for they shal
be naked in body as of clothing. Saue the fyre in Whiche
they breme and other fylthes. And naked shal they be
in folble of alle maner vertues. Whiche that is the clothing
of folble. Where ben themme the gay robis and the softe
shetis and fyn shertis. Lo What sayth god of hem by
the prophete Ysaye. that vnder hem shal be strawed mothes
and her ouertours shal be of Wormys of helle. And
furtherouer her mysese shal be in defaute of frendes for he is
not poure that hath good frendes. but ther is no frende.
For neyther god ne good creature shal be frende to hem
And euery of hem shal hate other With dedely hate. The
sones and the doughters shul rebelle ayenst the fader and
moder. And kyntrede ayenst kyntrede and chyden and des-
pisen eche other both day and nyght. as god saith by the
prophete Micheas. And the louyng childrey that some
tyme louedey so flesshely euerich of them Wolde ete other yf
he myghte. For how sholde they loue to gyder in the peynes
of helle. Whan they hatedy eche other in the prosperyte of
this lyf. For trust Wel. her fleshly loue is dedly hate as
saith the prophete Dauid. Who so loueth Wickednes he ha-
teth his folble. And Who so hateth his olbey folble. Certes
he may loue none other Wight in no maner. And therfore
in helle is no frendship but euer the more cursyng the more
chydyng and the more dedly hate is among hem. And
furtherouer they shal haue defautes of alle maner delites.
for Why. For delites ben appetites of the Wittes as sight.

Heerynge / smellynge / sauourynge / and tollchynge ¶
But in helle her sight shal be ful of derknes / of smoke
and ful of teris And her heerynge ful of weymentinge
and of gruntynge of teth as sayth Jhesu Crist / Her
nostrellys shal be ful of stynkynge / And as sayth
Ysaye the prophete / Her sauourynge shal be full of bit-
ter galle / And as touchynge her body it shal be couerid
with fyre that neuer shal be quenchid / And with wor-
mys that neuer shal deye as god saith by the mouth of
Ysaye / And for as muche as they shul not wene that
they mowe deye for peyne and by her deth fle fro peyne /
that may they vnderstond in the word of Job that saith
that there is the shadow of deth / Certes a shadowe hath
a lykenes of the thyng of whyche it is shadowyd /
Right so fareth the peyn of helle / it is lyke deth for the
angwissh horryble / and why / For it peyneth hem euer
as though men sholden dye anon / But certes they shal
not dye / For as saith seynt Gregore / to wreechid cay-
tyfs shal be deth without deth and ende without ende
and defaute without faylynge / For her deth shal alle
way lyue / And her ende shal euermore begynne / and
her defaute shal neuer fayle / And therfore sayth seynt
John the Euaungeliste / They shal folowe deth and
they shal not fynde hym and to desyre to dye and deth
shal fle fro them / And eke Job sayth That in helle is
none ordre of reule / And al be it so that god hath
created alle in ryght ordre / and nothyng withoute
ordre / But alle thynges be ordeyned and nombred /

Yet natheles they that be dampned be no thyng in ordre
ne holde noy ordre/ For the erthe shal bere hem no fruyt/
For as the prophete Dauid saith/ Gody shal destroye the
fruyt of the erth from hem/ Ne Water shal yeue hem no
moysture ne the eyer no refresshyng ne the fyre no light
For as saith saynt Basyle/ The bremmyng of the fyre of
this Worldy shal gody yeue to hem that bey dampned in helle
But the light and the clerenes shal be yeuen in heuen to
his childrey right as the goody may yeueth breedy to his
childrey and bones to his houndes/ And so they shal haue
none hope to escape/ And therfore speketh Job/ Atte last
ther shal horrour and grisly drede dwelley Withouten ende
Horrour is alle Way drede of harme that is to come/ And
thys drede shal euer dwelle in the hertes of hem that bey
dampned/ And therfore haue they lost al her hope for. vj.
causes/ First for gody that is her Juge shal be Withouten
mercy to hem/ ne they may not plese hym ne none of his
halowis/ ne may paye no thing for her raunson ne they haue
no leys to speke to hym/ ne they mowe not fle fro peyne/
And therfore sayth Salamon the Wicked may deyeth/
And Whan he is dede he shal haue none hope to escape from
payne/ Who so Wolde Wel Vnderstonde these peynes and
he thynke hym Wel that he hath deseruyd the peynes for his
synnes/ Certes he sholde haue more talent to syghe and
Wepe than for to synge and for to playe/ For as sayth
Salamon/ Who that hady the science for to knowe the peynes
that bey establyssheyd and ordeyned for synne he Wolde
forsake synne/ That science saith saynt Austyn makith
a may to Weymentey in his herte/

¶ The fourthe poynt that a man ought to make contri
cion forez is the ſorouful remembraunce of the goody
that he hath lefte to do here in erthe and eke the goody
that he hath lozn¶ Sothly the goody werkis that he hath
lefte / eyther they be the goody werkis that he wrought
er he fyll in to dedely ſynne / or ellis the goody werkis
that he wrought whyle he lay in dedely ſynne¶ Sothly
the goody that he dyde befozn that he fyl in dedely ſynne
ben al mortyfyed aſtoned and dulled by the eft
ſympnyng / ¶ The other werkes that he wrought whyle
he lay in ſynne ben vtterly ded as to the lyf perdurable
in heuen ¶ Than thilke goody werkes that ben morty-
fyed by efte ſympnyng whyche goody werkes he dyde
whyles he was in charyte nolde neuer quycken ayen
wythoute grete restreynt and wythdrawyng the
ſtrenges of mans corage and the meuynges in his
herte in ſuche manere as they ne ſkyppe out by anger
ne by Ire / ¶ And therof ſayth god by the mouth of
Ezechiel ¶ That yf the rightful man retorne agayn
from his ryghtwyſnes and to wirche wickednes ¶
ſhal he lyuen / nay ¶ For alle the goody werkis that
he hath wrought ſhulle neuer be in remembraunce / ¶
For he ſhal dye in his ſynne / ¶ And vpon that chap
pytre ſayth Seynt Gregory thus that we ſhal vnder-
ſtande pryncypally that whan we do dedely ſynne it is
nought¶ Neyther for to drawe in to memorye the goody
werkes that we haue wrought byforn¶ For certes in the

Werkynge of dedely ſynne ther is no truſt to goody werk
that we haue don beforn̄ / That is to ſaye as to haue ther by
the lyf pardurable in heuen / But ſothly the goody werkes
that men doy whyles they ben in dedly ſynne for as mykil
as they were doy in dedely ſynne they may neuer quycken / +
For certes thyngis that neuer had lyf may neuer quycken
And natheles al be it that they auayle not to haue the lyf
perdurable / yet auayleth they to a bryggge of the peyne of helle
Or ellis to gete temporel riches / or ellis that goody wyl ra-
ther enlumyne and lyghten the herte of the ſynful man to
haue repentaunce / + And eke they auayle to a man to do
goody werkis that the fende hath the laſſe power of his ſoule
And thus the curteys lordy Jheſu Criſt wil that no goody
werke be loſt / For m ſumwhat it ſhal auaylle / but for as
muche as the goody werkis that men doy whyles they ben
in goody lyf been al mortifyedy by ſynne folowynge / And
eke ſith alle the goody werkes that men doy whylis they be
in dedly ſynne ben vtterly dede as for to haue the lyf perdu
rable / wel may that man that no goody werk doth ſyngy
that freſh newe ſongy / Jay tout perdu moy temps et moy
labour / + For certes it bereueth a man goodnes andy na-
ture andy eke the goodnes of grace / For ſoth the grace of
the holy goſt farith as fyre that may not be ydle / For fyre
fayleth anon as it leſeth his werchyngy / Than leſeth the
ſynful man the goodnes of glorye that only is behoten to
goody men that labouren andy werken / wel may he be ſory
therme that oweth al his lyf to gody as longe as he liueth
And eek as longe as he ſhal lyue / that no goodnes hath
to paye with his dette to gody to whom he oweth al his lyf

For truſt wel he ſchal yeue accountys As ſayth Saynt Bernardꝰ / of alle the goodes that haue he yeuyn hym in this preſent lyf / Andꝰ holw he hath diſpendidꝰ them / not ſo muche that ther ſchal perylſhe an heer of his heedꝰ ne a moment of an hour that he ne ſchal yeue therof a rekenyngꝰ ¶ The fyfthe thingꝰ is that ought to meue a man to contrycion is Remembraunce of the paſſyon that our lordꝰ Jheſu ſuffridꝰ for our ſynnys / For as ſaith ſeynt Bernardꝰ / Whylis that J lyue J ſchal haue Remembraunce of the trauayllis that our lordꝰ Jheſu Criſt ſuffrydꝰ in prechyngꝰ / his werynes in trauelyngꝰ / his temptacions Whan he faſtedꝰ / his longe wakyngis Whan he praydꝰ + his teris Whan he wepte for pyte of goodꝰ peple / the woo andꝰ the ſchame andꝰ the fylthe that meyn ſeydeyn to hym + of the foule ſpittyngꝰ that meyn ſpyttein in his face / of the buffettys that meyn yaf hym / of the foule mouthis andꝰ of the foule repreuys that meyn to hym ſaydeyn of the nayllis With the Whiche he Was nayledꝰ to the Croſſe / andꝰ of alle the Remenaunt of his paſſyon that he ſuffrydꝰ for mannys ſynne andꝰ nothyngꝰ for his gylt / Andꝰ ye ſchal vnderſtande ꝑ euery maner ordre of ordenaunce is tornedꝰ vp ſo doun / For it is ſoth that godꝰ andꝰ reſon andꝰ ſenſualyte andꝰ the body of a man be ſo ordeynedꝰ + that euerich of thyſe foure thynges ſchul haue lordſchip ouer that other as thus godꝰ ſholdꝰ haue lordſchip ouer reſon / andꝰ reſon ouer ſenſualyte andꝰ ſenſualyte ouer the body of man / But ſothly man ſemeth al this ordꝛ of ordenaunce is turnedꝰ vp ſo doun / ¶ Andꝰ therfore theme for as mykyl as the Reſon of man wyl

Wil not be ſubget ne obeiſſaunt to gody that is lozdy by right
Therfore leſeth it the lozdſhip that it ſholdy haue in ſen-
ſualite andy eke ouer the body of may. Andy Why foz ſen-
ſualite rebelleth theme ayenſt reſon. Andy by that Wey le-
ſith reſon his lozdſhip ouer ſenſualite andy ouer the body.
Foz right as reſon is rebel to gody. Right ſo is ſenſualite
rebel to reſon andy the body alſo. Andy certes thys orde-
naunce Andy this rebellion our lozdy Jheſu Criſt abought
bpon his body Wel deer. andy herkeneth in Whiche Wyſe.
Foz as mykyll theme as reſon is rebell to gody therfore
is may Wozthy to haue ſorowe andy to be dede. This ſuffridy
our lozdy Jheſu foz may after he Was betraidy of his diſci-
ple andy diſtreynedy & boundy ſo that the bloody braſt out
at euery naylle of his hondes as ſaith ſaynt Auguſtyn.
Andy ferthermoze foz as mykyl as reſon of may Wil not
daunte ſenſualite Whan it may. Therfore is may Wozthy
to haue ſhame. Andy this ſuffredy our lozdy Jheſu Criſt
foz may Whan they ſpitten in his viſage. Andy ferther ouer
they foz as muche as the caytyf body of may is rebell bothe
to reſon andy to ſenſualite therfore it is Wozthy the deth.
Andy this ſuffridy our lozdy Jheſu Criſt foz may bpon the
croſſe. Where as ther Was no parte of his body fre Without
grete payne andy bitter paſſion Andy al this ſuffredy Jheſu
Criſt that neuer fozfetedy. To muche am I peynedy foz tho
thinges that I neuer deſerupdy andy to mykyl defouledy foz
frendſhip that may is Wozthy to haue. Andy therfore may
the ſinful may Wel ſaye as ſeynt Bernardy ſeith Aurſidy
be the bitternes. Foz certis after diuerſe diſcordaunces of
our Wickednes Was the paſſion of Jheſu Criſt y ordeynedy

in diuerse thinges as thus/Certes synful mans soule be/
trayd the deuyl by couetyse of temporel prosperite and scor
nys by disceyt Whan he chesith flesshly delites / And is
tormentyd be Impacyence of aduersite and despet by ser/
uage in subiectyon of synne / And atte laste he is slayn
synally / For this discordance of synful man / Was Jhesu
Crist first betraid/and aftir that Was he bounde that cam
for to vnbynde vs of synne and of the peyne/Themme Was
he descourgedy that only sholdy be honouridy in alle thingis
and of al thingis / Themme Was his visage despyt that
ought to be desyredy for to be seyn of al mankynde / In
Whiche visage aungels desirey to loke / and theryn Was
vilemsly despette/Themme Was he scorznedy that nothingy
hady gilt/And synally themme Was he crucifyedy & sleyn +
Themme Were compliszedy the Wordes of Ysaye that saith +
He Was Woundedy for our misdedis and defouledy for our
vilonyes / Now sith that Jhesu Crist toke on hym self the
peyne of al our Wickednes / mikyl ought synfull man to
Wepe and to beWaylle that for his synnes goddis sone of
heuen sholdy al this peyne endure. ¶ The+vj+thingy that
ought to meue a mā to contricion is the hope of thre thinges
that is to saye forgifnes of synne / and the yefte of grace
Wel for to doo/And the ioye of heuen With the Whiche godi
shal guerdon man for his goody dedes/And for as muche
as Jhesu Crist yauyth vs the yeftis of his grace and of
his souerayn bounte / Therfore is he clepedy Jhesus naze/
renus Rex Judeor / Jhesus is for to saye sauyour or saua/
cion on Whom men shul hopey to haue forzeuenes of syn/
nys / Whyche that is properly sauacion of synnys ¶

And therfore saidy the aungel to Joseph/ Thou shalt clepe his name Jhesus that shal saue his peple of her symmys. And herof saith seynt Peter/ Ther is none other name vnder heuyn that is yeuyn to ony may by Whiche a man may be sauyd but only Jhesus/ Nazarenus is as moche for to saye as florisshyngy in Whiche a man shal hope that he that yeuyth hym remission of symmys shal also yeue hym grace Wel for to do/ For in the flour is hope of fruyt in tyme co= mynge/ And in forzeuenes of symme hope of grace Wel to doo I Was atte dore of thyn herte saidy Jhesus andy clepedy for to entre/ he p̄ openeth to me shal haue forzeuenes of symmys I Wil entre in to hym by my grace/ andy soupe With hym by the goody Werkis that he shal do/ Whiche Werkis ben the fode of gody/ And he shal sope With me by the grete ioye that shal be youen to hym/ Thus shal man hope that for his Werkis of penaunce gody shal yeue hym his regne as he be= hoteth hym in the gospel/ Now shal man vnderstande in What maner shal be his contricion/ I saye hit shal be vny= uersal andy total/ that is to saye a man shal be redy repen taunt for alle his symmys that he hath doy in delite of his thought/ For delite is perilous/ For ther be two maners of consentynges that one of hem is clepedy consentyngy of af fection/ Whan a man is mouydy to do symme ayenst the lawe of gody/ Al though his reson consente not to do symme in dede Yet seyn some doctours y men that suche delite that dWellith longe is ful perylous/ al be it neuer so lyte/ And also a man shoody sorwe namely for al that euer he hath desiredy ayen the lawe of gody With parfight consentyngy to the dede Wherfore I saye that many men repente hem neuer of suche

thoughtes & delytes & neuer schriue hem of it but only of the dede of grete symnes outwardy / Wherfore I saye that suche wicked delites & Wickedy thoughtes hey subtile begilars of hem that schal be dampnedy / More ouer may ought to sorowe for his Wickedy Wordes & for his Wickedy dedes / For certes repentaunce of a singuler symne andy not repentynge of alle his other symnys / or ellis repentinge hym of al his other symnes andy not of a synguler symne may not auayle / For certes gody almighty is alle goody And therfore he forzeuyth alle or ellis right nought / And therfore saith saint Austyn / I Wote certeinly þ̄ gody is enemy to euery symar / And holy than he that obserueth one symne / schal he haue forzeuenes of the remenaunt of his other symnys / nay / And ferther ouer contricion schody be Wonder sorouful & auguysshous / And therfore yeuyth hym gody plainly his mercy / And therfore Whan my soWle Was auguysshous Within me I hady remembraunce of gody that my prayer might come to hym / Fur / therouer contricion muste be continuel andy that men haue stedfast purpose to schryue hem & for to amende hem of her lif For sothly Whyle contricion lasteth / man may haue hope of forzeuenes / And of this cometh hate of symne that destroyeth symne bothe in hym self andy eke in other folke at his power / For Whiche Dauid saith / Ye that louey gody / hate Wickednes / + For trusteth Wel to loue gody is for to loue that he loueth andy hate that he hateth ¶ The last thingy that a may schal Vnderstondy in contricion is this Wherof auayleth contricion / I say somtyme þ̄ contricion deliuerith a man fro symne / of Whiche dauid saith / I saye qdy dauid / I purpose fermli to schriue me & thou lord hast relesidy my symne

And right so as contricion auayll̄eth not Without sadȝ purpose of shrifte and satisfaction/right so confession ne satisfaction auayle not Without contricion . For muche contricion destroyeth the prison of helle/and maketh Week and feble the strength of the deuyll / and restoryth the yefte of the holy gost and of alle vertuys and mterclen; sith the soule of synne & deliueryth the soule fro the peyne of helle and fro the company of the deuyll/And fro ser; uage of synne/and restorith to alle goodes spirituel in to the company and cōmunyon of holy chirche/And ferther; ouer hit maketh hym that Was Whylom sone of yre/to be the sone of grace / And alle these thynges he putteth to holy Wryt / And therfore he that Wyl sette his entent to thyse thīnges he Were ful Wyse / For theme he shold not in al his lyf haue corage to synne / But theme his body and alle his herte he shold conformme to the seruyse of Jhesu Crist / And therfore do hym homage for certes our Swete lord Jhesu Crist hath spared vs so benyngly in our folyes that yf he ne had pyte on mans soWle/a sory songe myght We alle synge/ ¶

Explicit prima pars penitencie .

Incipit secunda pars ¶

The second part of penitence is confession/and that is signe of contricion/Now shal ye vnderstande What is confession/and Whether hit ought nedes to be or none / And Whiche thinges be couenable to very confession/ First shalt thou vnderstande that confession is very shewyng of synne to the preest / this is to saye very / For he must confesse hym of alle the condicions that be longyng to his.

ſynne as ferſ zth as he can / alle muſt be ſaid and nothing
excuſed ne hid ne forbrappid and not auaunte hym of
his good werkis / And fertherouer it is neceſſarye to
vnderſtande whens that ſynnys ſpryngen / And how they
encreen / And ther ben ſpryngyng of ſynnys as ſeyth
ſeynt Poule in this wyſe / That right as by a man ſynne
entryd firſt in to this worlde / and thurgh that ſynne
deyde / Right ſo deth entryd in to alle men that ſynneden
And this man was adam by whom that ſynne entryd
in to this world / whan he brak the comandement of god
And therfore he that firſt was ſo myghty that he ſholde
not haue deyd / beeam ſuche one that he muſte nedes deye
whether he wolde or no and al his progenye that is in
this world that in that maner ſynne deyen / Loke that
in the ſtate of Jmocence whan Adam and Eue were na
ked in paradyſe and no ſhame had of her nakydnes /
how that the ſerpent that was moſt wyly of al other beſtes
that god had made ſayd to the woman / comanded god
to you ye ſhuld not ete of euery tre in paradyſe / The wo
man anſwerd of the fruyt ſayd ſhe of the trees in para
dyſe we feden vs / But ſothly of the fruyt of the tree that
is in the mydel of paradyſe / god forbad vs for to eten
ne to touche it leſt peraventure we ſhal deye / The ſerpent
ſaid to the woman / nay / nay / ye ſhal not deye of deth
For ſoth god wote that what day that ye ete therof your
eyen ſhal open and ye ſhal be as godes knowyng
good and harm / The woman ſawe that the tre was
good to feding and fair to the eye and delectable to the
ſight / She took of the fruyt of the tree and ete of hit /

And yaf of hit to her husbonde / and he eet / And anon
the eyen of hem bothe opend / And whan they knewe that
they were nakyd / they sowid of a fyg tre leeuys in maner
of brechis to hiden her membris / Here may ye see that redely
synne hath first suggestion of the fende / As shewith here
by the adder / And afterward the delyte of the flesh as
shewith here by Eue / And after by consentyng of reson
as shewith by Adam / For trust wel though so were the
fende tempted one that is to saye the flesh / And the flesh
had delyte in the beaute of the fruyt defendid / Yet certes
til that reson that is to saye Adam consentid to the etyng
of the fruyt / he stode high in the state of Innocence Of that
Adam toke we that synne of oryginal / For of hym flesshly
descended ben we alle and engendrid of vile and corupt
mater / And whan the soule is put in our body right anon
is contract originyal synne / And that was only peyne of
concupiscence / whiche is afterward both peyne and synne
And therfore be we alle bozn sones of wrath & of damp-
nacion perdurable yf ne were baptesme that we receyue /
Whyche benymeth vs the aulpe / but forsothe the peynes dwelle
with vs as the temptacion / Whyche peyne highte concu-
piscence / And this concupiscence whan it is wrongfully
disposed or ordeyned in man / hit maketh him coueyte coue
tyse of flesh and flesshly synne by sight of his eyen as to
erthely thinges / And eke couetyse of highnes by pryde of
herte / Now as for to spekte of the first couetyse that is con-
cupiscence after the lawe of our membres that were lawfully
made and by ryghtful Jugement of god / I say for as
muche as a man is not obeyssaunt to god that is his lord

Therfore is his herte to hym disobeyssant / thurgh con=
cupiscence / hit is Impossible but he be tempted som tyme
and noyed in his flesh to syme / And thys thyngh
may not fayle as longe as he lyueth / hit may Wel Wexe
feble and fayle by vertu of baptesme / And by the grace
of god thurgh penytence / But fully shal it neuer quenche
That he ne shal somtyme be meuyd in hym self / but yf
he Were al refreyned by sykenes or by malice of sorcerye
or colde drynkes ¶ For What saith seynt Poule / The
flesh coueyteth ayenst the spirytе / And the spiryt ayenst
the flesh they ben so contrary / And so strynen that man
may not do alWay as he Wolde / The same seynt Paule
after his grete penaunce in Water and in londe by nyght
and by day by grete paryl and in grete peyne in londe in
grete famyn and thryst in colde and ones stoned al=
most to the deth / Yet sayde he alas I caytyf may / Who
shal delyuere me fro the pryson of my caytyf body / And
Saint Jherome sayde / Whan he longh tyme had dWelled
in desert / Where as he had no companye but bestes Where
as he had no mete but herbes and Water to his drynk
ne no bed but the naked erthe ¶ For Whyche is flesh
Was blak as an Ethyope for hete and destroyed for
colde / Yet said he the bremynyngh of lechery boylled in al
his body / Wherfore I Wote Wel sikerly that they be dis=
cayued that say that they be not tempted in her sede
springyngh / As Wel may the chorle be saued as the lord
The same deth that the chorle taketh the lord taketh / +
Wherfore I rede do ryght so by thy chorle / as thou Wol=
dest thy lord did Wyth the yf thou Were in his plighte.

Euery ſymeful mā is chorle to ſymme / J rede the certes thou
lordy that thou reule the ín ſuche wyſe that thy chorles rather
loue the thenne hate the / J wote wel ther is degre aboue degre
as reſon is & ſkille is that men do her deuoyr there as it is
due / But certes extorcions andy deſpites of your ynder /
lynges is dampnable Andy furthermore ynderſtonde wel
that conquerours or tyrauntis maken wel ofte thrallis of
hem that ben bory of as ryall blody as they that hem con /
queryn / This name of thraldom was neuer knowen erſt
tal that Noe saidy / his ſone Canaan ſholdy be thral to his
brethery for his ſymme / What ſaye we thenne of them that
pylle andy do extorcions to holy chirche / Certes the ſwerdy
that men yeuyn firſt to a knyght whan he is nelle dubbydy
ſignefyeth that he ſholdy defende holy chirche andy not robbe
hem / Andy who ſo doth is a traytour to Criſt as ſayth
ſeynt Auſtyn / Tho ben the deuyllis wolues that ſtrangelin
the ſheep of Jheſu Criſt andy do worſe than wolues / For
ſoth whan ỹ wolf hath ful his wombe he ſtynteth to ſtrangle
ſheep / But ſothly the pyllours andy deſtroyers of goodes
of holy chirche do not ſo / For they ſtynte neuer to pylle / +
Nolle haue J saydy ſyn ſo is that ſymme was firſt cauſe of
thraldom andy ſubiection / But certes ſith the tyme of grace
cam / godi ordeyned that ſom folk ſholdy be made more in
high aſtate and high degre / andy ſom folk more lolle Andy
that euerich ſholdy be ſeruydy in his aſtate andy his degre +
Andy therfore in ſom contrees there as they ben thrallis +
When they haue tornedy hem to the feyth / they make her
thrallis fre out of thraldom / Andy therfore certes the lordy
olleth to his may / that the may olleth to the lordy / The

Pope clepeth hym self seruant of seruauntes of god / But
for as muche as the state of holy chirche might not be kept
in reste ne in pees in erthe / but yf god had ordeyned that
som men haue heyer degree / and som men lower / Therfore was
souereynte ordeyned to kepe and maintene and defende her
Inderlyngis or her subiettes in reson as ferforth as it lieth
in her power / and not to destroye hem ne confounde / Wher-
fore I say thilke lordes ben Wolues that deuouren the
possessions or the catel of other folk Wrongfully Withoute
mercy or mesure / They shul be releuyd by the same mesure
that they haue mesured to poure folk for the mercy of Jhesu
Crist but they it amende / Now shul ye Inderstande in What
maner synne Weyith and encresith in man / The first thing
is that norisshyng of synne of Whiche I spak bifore that is
concupiscence / And after that cometh suggestion of the de-
uyl / that is to saye the deuyllis Welpe / With Whiche he blo-
With in man the fyre of concupiscence / And after that a
man bethinketh hym Whether he Wol do or no that thing to
Whiche he is tempted / And than yf that a man Wyth-
stont and Weyue the first tysyng of his flesh and of the
fende / than it is no synne / and yf so be he do not than feleth
he anone a flame of delite / And than it is good to bewaar
and to kepe hym Wel or ellis he Wol falle anon in to consen
tyng of synne / And than Wil he do hit yf he may haue tyme
and space / And of this mater saith Moyses by the deuyl
in this maner / The fende saith I Wil chace & pursiewe the
mā by Wicked suggestion / and I Wil hente him by meuyng
or stering of synne / and I Wil departe my preyse or my pray
by deliberacion / and my lust shal be accomplissshed in delyte.

I wyl dealbe myn ſwerdy in conſentyng/ For certes right as a ſwerdy departeth one in two pecys/right ſo conſenting departeth godȝ from man/Andȝ thenne wil I ſle hym with my honde in deth of ſynne/Thus ſaith the fende/ For certes thenne is a man al dede in ſoule/Andȝ thus is ſynne com= plyſſhidȝ by temptacion/ by delyte andȝ by conſentyng/+ Andȝ thenne ſynne is clepedȝ a meruayll/ For ſoth ſynne is in two maners/eyther it is venial or dedely ſynne Sothly whan a man loueth ony creature more than Ihesu Criſt our creatour thenne is hit dedely ſynne/Andȝ venyal ſynne yf a man loue Ihesu Criſt leſſe than hym ought/ Forſothe the dede of this venyal ſynne is ful perilous for hit amenuſith the loue that men ſholdȝ haue to godȝ more ⁊ more/Andȝ therfore yf a man charge more hym ſelf with many ſuche venyal ſynnes/Certes but yf ſo be that he diſcharge of hem by ſhryfte/they may wel lightly amenuſe in hym al the loue that he hath to Ihesu Criſt Andȝ in this wyſe ſkyppeth ve nyal ſynne in to dedely ſynne/ For certes the more that a man chargith his ſoule with venyal ſynnys the more is he inclinedȝ to dedely ſynne/Andȝ therfore leet vs not be ne= cligent in diſchargyng vs of venyal ſynne+ For the pro= uerbe ſaith many ſmale makyth a greet/+ Andȝ herkene thys enſample/ a grete wawe of the ſee comyth ſomtyme with ſo greet a violence that it drenſchith the ſhip Andȝ the ſame harme do ſomtyme the ſmale dropes of water/that entre thurgh a lityl creuys in the thurrok andȝ in the bottom of the ſhipp yf men be ſo negligent that they diſcharge hem not by tyme/ Andȝ therfore al though ther be difference betwene thyſe two cauſes of drenchyng/ yet algates the

ſhip is dreynt / Right ſo farith it ſometyme of dedly ſynne
& of anoyous kenyal ſynnys Whan they multeplye in many
ſo gretly that the Worldly thynges that he loueth thurgh
Whiche he ſynneth kenyally is as grete in his herte as the
loue of godȝ or more / Andȝ therfore the loue of euery thinge
that is not beſet ne doȝ principally for godes ſake / alle
though a many loueth laſſe than godȝ / yet is it kenyal ſynne
Andȝ dedely ſynne is Whan the loue of ony thinȝ Weyeth
in the herte of man as muche as the loue of godȝ or more.
Dedely ſynne as ſaith ſaint Auſtyn is Whan a many tor-
neth his herte from godȝ Whyche that is kray ſouerayn
bounte that may not be chaungedȝ / Andȝ yeueth his herte
to a thynȝ that may chaunge andȝ flytte / Andȝ certes
that is euery thinȝ ſaue godȝ of heuen / Forſoth yf that a
many yeue his loue Whiche he oweth to godȝ With alle his
herte vnto a Creature certes ſo muche of loue as he yeueth
to ſuche a Creature / ſo muche kereueth he fro godȝ / Andȝ
therfore doth he ſynne For he that is dettour to godȝ ne yel-
deth not al his dette to godȝ that is to ſaye al the loue of
his herte / Now ſith a many vnderſtondeth generally Whiche
is kenyal ſynne / than is it couenable to telle ſpecyally of
ſynnes Whiche that many a many peraventure demeth hem
not ſynnys andȝ ſhryueth hem not of the ſame ſynnes +
Andȝ yet natheles they be ſynnes + Andȝ ſothly as cler-
kis Wryten this is to ſaye that euery tyme that a many
eteth or drynketh more than ſuffyſeth to ſuſtenaunce of
his body certayn he doth ſynne / + Eke Whan he herke-
neth not the compleynt of the poure men / + Eke Whan
he ſpeketh more than hyt nedeth it is ſynne + /

Eke whan he is in helth of body and wil not faste whan
other men faste without cause resonable / Eke whan he sle-
peth more than needeth / or whan he cometh by that encheson
to late to chirche or to other werkys of charyte / Eke whan
he visith his wyf withouten desyre souerayn of engendrure
to the honour of god or for thentent to yelde his wyf the
dette of his body / eke whan he wil not visite the syke or the
prysoners whan he may / eke yf he loue wyf or chylde or ony
other wordly thyng more than reson requyreth / eke yf he
flatere or blaundyse more than hym ought for ony necessite
Eke yf he amenuse or withdrawe the almes of the poure /
eke yf he apparaylle his mete more deliciously than nede is
or ete it to hastely by lycherousnes Eke yf he talke vanytees
in the chirche or at godes seruyse or that he be a talker of
ydle wordes of foly or of vilonye / For he shal yeue acoun-
tes of hit at the day of dome / eke whan he behoteth or assu-
reth to do thinges that he may not performe / eke whan by
lyghtnes of folye myssayeth or scornyth his neyghbour /
Eke whan he hath ony wickyd suspecion of thing there be
woot of hit no sothfastnes / These thinges and moo with
outen nombre be symnes as saith saint Austyn / Now shal
ye vnderstonde that al be hit so that none erthely man may
eschewe alle venyal symnes / yet may he refreyne hym by the
bremyng loue that he hath to our lord Jhesu Crist / And
by prayers and confession and other good werkes so that
it shal but litel greue / For as saith saint Austyn / yf a
man loue god in suche maner that al that euer he doth is
in the loue of god or for the loue of god / loke how mykyl
that a drope of water that fallith in a furneys ful of fyre

amoyeth or greuith so mykel anoieth a venyal synne vnto a man that is parfight in the loue of Jhesu Crist/Men may also refreyne venyal synne by the receyuyng of the precyous body of Jhesu Crist / by receyuyng eke of holy Water / by almes dede / by general confession of confiteor at masse & at pryme and complyne / and by blissyng of bisshopps and of preestis and by other goody Werkis .

De septē peccatis mortalibz. Incipit de supbia.

NOw it is behouely thyng to tellyn Whiche ben dedely synnes / that is to saye caytif of synnes / Alle they reme in to oons but in diuerse maner / Noon be they clepedy caytifs for as muche as they be chief & springing of alle other symys/Of the rote of thyse. viij. symys is pryde the general rote of alle harmis for of this rote springey certain braunchis as Ire/enuye/accidye or slouthe/auarice or couetyse to comyn vnderstandyng/glotonye/and lecherye / Andy euerich of thise synnes hath his braunchis and his twiggis as shal be declaredy in her chapitres folowyng/ Andy though so be that man knoweth not vtterly the nombre of the twiggis andy of the harmys that comen of pryde/yet Wil I shewe a partye of hem as ye shal vnderstande/ Ther is inobedience/auaunt/tyng/ypocrysye/despyte/arwogancye/Imprudence/swellingy of herte/Insolence/Elacion/pertynacye/veyn glorye/Andy many other twiggis that I can not declare/Inobedient is he that disobeieth for despite to the comandement of god & to his souereins andy to his gostly fader / Auaunteour is he that auaunteth hym of the harme or of the bounte that he hath dony Ypocrysye is he that hideth to shewe hym suche as he is . Andy shewith hym to the peple to seme suche as he is not.

Dispitous is he that hath disdayen of his neyghbour that is to saye of his euen cristen and hath despyte to doo that hym ought to do / Arrogaunt is he that thynketh that he hath that bounte in hym that he hath not / or weneth that he shold haue hit by his desert / or ellis that he demeth that he be that he is not / Imprudent is he that for his pryde hath no shame for his synne / Swellyng of herte is whan a mā reioyseth hym of harm that he hath don / Insolent is he that dispyseth in his Jugement alle other folke as to the regarde of his value and of his comyng and of his spekyng and of his berying / Elate is he whan he may neyther suffre to haue maister ne felowe / Impaciant is he that wil not be taught ne vndernome of his vices and by strif warrith ayenst trouthe wetyngly and defendeth his foly / Contu / may is he that thorugh his Indignacion is ayenst euery auctorite or power of hem that been his souereyns / Presumpcion is whan a man taketh an enprise that hym ought not to do / or ellis he may it not do / And that is callid Surquydry / Irreuerence is whan a man doth not honour there as hym ought to do and wayteth to be reuerencyd / Pertynacy is whan a man defendeth his foly and trusteth to mykyl to his owen witte / Veyn glorye is for to haue pompe and delyte in temporel highnes & glorifye hym in wordly estates / Jangelyng is whan a man spekith to mykyl to forn folk and clappyth as a mylle and taketh no kepe what he saith And ther is yet a pryue spyce of pryde that wayteth first to be salewyd or he salewe / al be he lesse worthy than that other is pauenture and eke he wayteth to sytte or to goo aboue hym in the weye or kysse pax or be sensyd

or go to offrynge before his neyghbour and suche a proude
desire to be magnified and honoured before the peple / Now
bey ther two maners of pryde that one of hem is within the
herte of man / And that other is without / Of whiche
forsaid thinges and moo than I haue said appertheynen to
the pryde that is within the herte of man / And ther be also
other spices of pride that be without. But nathèles one of
thyse spices of pride is signe of that other / Right as the gay
lesshel of tauernes is signe of the wyn that is in the seler / and
this is in many thinges as in speche in contenance in outra
geousnes / of aray of clothynge Crist wold not so sone haue
noted and spoken of the clothinge of that riche man in the
gospel but yf hit had be synne ¶ For as saith seynt Gre /
goze / Precyous clothynge is aulpable for the derthe of hit
and for his strangenes / for his disguysynges and for
the superfluyte / or for the inordynate scantues / As to the
first synne that is in supfluyte of clothinge / Whiche that
maketh it so dere to harm of the peple that only the cost of
the enbrouddinge / the disgysinge endentynge / or kerynge /
oundynge / palynge and semblable wyse of clothinge in
kanyte / Ther is also costlew furrynge in gownes / And
also mykyl pounsynge of chesell to make hoolis so mykyl
daggynge of sherys with the superfluyte in lenghte of the
forsayd gownys traylynge in the dong and in the myre
on hors and eke on foot as wel of man as of woman +
that al that traylynge is verily as in effect Wasted / consu
med / thredbare & wery with dong rather than it is yeuen
to the poure / to grete domage of the forsaid poure folk and
that in sondry wyse / this is to sayn the more that cloth

is Wastyd the moze muste it coste foz the scarsenes/And
furtherouer yef they Wolde yeue suche pounsid and naggis
clothis to the poure folk / it is not conuenyent to Were foz
her estate ne sufficyent to her necessite / Oy that other syde
foz to speke of the disordinat scantnes of clothyng as ley
these cutted sloppis oz hanselynes that thurgh her shortnes
couer not the shameful membris of a nay to Wicked en=
tent/Allas some of hem shewen in the shap and the boos
of the horrible sWolley membris that semen like to the ma=
ladye of hirma in the Wrappyng of her hosyn and eke the
buttokkis of hem behynde that farey as it Were the hynder
part as a she ape in the ful of ỹ mone/And moze ouer the
Wreachid sWellyng membris that they shelde in disgising
in departyng of her hosyn Whit and rede semeth that half
the prpuy membris Were fleyn/And so by that they depar=
ten her hosen in other colours as is Whit & black / oz Whyt
and blelde/oz black and reed and so forth/Thay semeth
it as by Variance of colour that half the part of his preuy
membris ley corupt by the fyre of seynt Antonye / oz by
Canker / oz by other suche myschaunces / yet of the hyndar
part of her buttoks it is Wel horrible foz to see / For certes
in that partye of her body/ther as they purgen her stynkyng
ordure / that foule party shelde they proudly to the peple in
despit of honeste / Whiche honeste that Jhesu Crist and his
frendes obserued to shelde in his lyf / Nolde as to outera=
geous aray of Woman/god Wote though the visage of hem
seme ful chast and debonair/yet notifyen they in their araye
of a tyre / lichorousnes and pryde / I saye not that honeste
in clothyng of man & Woman is vnreuenable/but certes

the superfluyte or disordinat scarcete of clothinge is reprouable/Also ỹ synne of ornement or in apparaill as in thinges that apperteyne to ridynge/as in many delicat horses ỹ be holden for delite be cause they be so fair fat & costlewe/And also many a vicyous knaue maintenyd be cause of hem/And in curyous harneys as in sadels/capers/peytrellis/& bridels couyrd with precious cloth & riche barres & plates of gold & siluer For whiche god saith by Zacharie the prophete/I wil confounde ỹ riders on suche horsis/These folk taken litylle ys gard of ridinge of godes sone & his harneys whan he rood vpon an asse & had non other harneys but ỹ clothis of his pouere disciplis/Ne we rede not ỹ he rode euer on ony other best. I speke thus the of superfluyte/not for the honeste whan reson it requireth/And fertherouer certes pryde is gretly notifyed in holdynge of grete meyne whan they be of litylle prouffit/and namely whan the meyne is felenous & damageous to the peple by hardynes of her lordshipe or by wey of office/For certes such lordis sellyn her lordshipps to ỹ deuil of helle/whan they susteyne ỹ wickednes of her meyne/or els whan these folk of lowe degre as they ỹ holden hostelryes susteyne theftes by ther hostelers & that is in many maners of disceytes/suche maner of folk ben the flyes ỹ folowen ỹ hony Or els the houndes that folowen ỹ carein which forsaid folk stragglen spirituelly her lordshipe For which thus saith dauid Wickednes mot come on the lorshipps/& god gyue that they mowe descende wury in to helle/For in her houses is iniquyte & shrewdnes & not god of heuyn/& certes yf ỹ do no mendement right as god yaf his blessinge to laban be cause of Jacob & to pharao for ỹ seruise of ioseph/right so wil god ieue his malison

to ſuche lordes that ſuſteyne the Wickednes of her ſeruauntis
But the comyn pryde of the table appereth eke ful ofte For
certes riche men be cleped to feſtis and poure folk be put
abbey and rebuked/And ther is exceſſe of diuerce metes
and drynkes & namely of curyous maner of bakemetis
and of ſemblable waſt ſo that it is abuſion for to thynke
And eke in grete precyouſnes of veſſel and curioſite of
mynyſtralcye by the Whiche a man is ſtyred more to the de
lytes of luxurye/yf ſo be that he ſette his herte the leſſe vpon
our lordy Jheſu Criſt certeyn it is a ſynne/And certes the
delycate metis and the delyte myght be ſo greet in the caas
that men might the lightlyer falle by hem in to dedly ſynne
The ſpyces that ſourden of pryde/ſothly is Whan they ſourden
of malice ymagined and auiſed and forn caſt or els of
vſage/been dedly ſynnys it is no doubte/And Whan they
ſourden by freelte vnauyſed ſodenly/and ſodenly With-
drawe agayn/al be they greuous ſynnys/I geſſe & ſuppoſe
they be not dedly/Now myght men axe Wherof that pryde
ſourdeth and ſpryngeth/And I ſaye that ſomtyme it
ſpryngeth of goodes of nature/And ſomtyme of the goo-
des of fortune/and ſom tyme of the goodes of grace/Certes
the goodes of nature ſtonden in the goodes of body or of ſoule
Certes the goodes of the body ben hele of body/ſtrenghte/de-
lyuernes/beaute/gentrye and fraunchiſes/The goodis of
nature of the ſoule ben/goody Witte With ſharp vnderſton-
dyng/ſubtil engyn/vertu naturel/goody memorye/Goodes
of fortune ben riches/high degrees of lordſhippis & prey-
ſyng of the peple/Goodes of grace ben ſcience/power to ſuf-
fre ſpirytuel trauayle/benignytees/vertuous contemplacõn

Withstandyng of temptacion and semblable thynges.
Of whiche forsaidy goodes certes it is a grete foly a man
to prydey hym in ony of hem alle / Now as for to speke of
goodes of nature ghy wote that som tyme we haue them
in nature as muche to our damage as to our prouffyt / .
As for to speke of hele of body certes it passith ful lightly
And eke it is ful ofte thencheson of the sikenes of the sowle
For ghy wote the flesh is a ful grete enemy to the soule.
And therfore the more that a body is hool / the more be we in
peryl to falle / Eke for to pryde hym in his strenghte of body
it is a grete folye / For certes the flesh coueyteth ayenst the
spiryte / And euer the more stronger the flesh is / the soryer
may the soule be / And ouer al this strength of the body
and wordly hardynes causeth ful ofte many mey to perylle
and myschance. Eke for to pryde hym of his genterye / it is
ful grete folye. For ofte tyme the genterye of the body begyn
neth of the gentrye of the sowle / And eke we be alle of one
fader & of one moder / And alle we hey of one nature wotyn
and corupt bothe riche and poure / For sothe a maner gen /
trye is for to preyse that apparaylleth mannes corage with
vertues or moralytees and makith hym a Cristen childy.
For trusteth wel that what may that symme hath ouer mais
tryd is very chorle to symme / Now hey ther thre general
thynges of gentilnes as eschewyng of vices or ryhtwysnes
And seruage of symme in wordy and werk in contenance
And vsyng vertu as courtesye / clemmesse and to be liberal
that is to saye large by mesure. For that that passith mesure
is folye and symme / Another is that he remembre hym of
the bounte that he of other folk hath resseyuyd / Another

And is to be benygne ouer his subgette/ Wherfore as saith
Seneke/ Ther is nothyng moze couenable to may of high
estate that debonayrte¶ And these flyes that men clepen
Bees When they make her kynge/ they chesen one that hath
non pryke WherWith he may stynge¶ Another is a man
to haue a noble herte and a diligent tatteyne to hye vertuoz
thynges/ Certes also Who that pryeth in the goodis of foz-
tune he is ful lyke a grete fole¶ Foz somtyme a man is a
ful grete man by the mozow¶ that is a Wrecche oz a caytyf
oz it be nyght/ And somtyme delytes of man ben cause of
greuous maladye thorugh Whiche he deyeth/ Certes the com
mendacion of the peple is somtyme ful fals and ful brotyl
foz to truste This day they preyse/ to mozow they blame/ gon
Woot/ Eke desire to haue comendacion of the peple hath cau-
sed many a man Mow certes a man to pryde hym
in the goodis of grace is eke an outrageous folye foz the yef
tes of grace that shold haue tozned hym to goodnes and
to medecyne toznyth to venym and to confusion/ as saith
seynt Gregoze/ Mow sith that so is that ye haue vnderstonde
What is pryde and Whiche ben the spicis of hit/ and how
memys pryde sourdeth and spryngith¶ Mow shal ye vnder
ande Whiche is the remedye agaynst pryde¶ And that is
humylyte oz mekenes/ That is a vertu thurgh Whiche man
hath very knowleche of hym self and holdeth of hym self
no deynte ne no pryce as in regard of his desertes conside-
ryng euer his freelte/ Mow ben ther thre maners of humy
lyte/ as humylyte in herte/ and another in the mouth/ and
ỹ thirde in Werkis/ The humylite in herte is in foure maners
that is When a mā holdeth hym self as nought Worth bifore

gody of heuyn/ Another is Whan he despiseth none other man
The thirde is / that he reckith not though men holde hym
nought / The fourthe is Whan he is not sory of his humilia
cion/ Also the humyliacion of mouth is in foure thinges.
In attemperat speche ¶ And Whan he knowith With his
owen mouth that he is suche as he thinkith that he is in his
herte/ Another Whan he preiseth the debonairte of another mā
And also nothyng therof amenusith ¶ Humylite eke in
Werkis is in foure maners ¶ The first is Whan he put men
before hym/ The seconde is to chese the lowest place/ The.iij.
is gladly to assente to goody counceyl ¶ The.iiij. is gladly
to stonde in obedience of his souereyn or of hym that is hi-
gher in degre/ Certes that is a grete Werk of humylite ¶

Sequitur de Inuidia.

After pryde Wil I speke of the foule synne of enuye.
Which that is as by the Worde of the philosophre sorow
of other mennys prouffit ¶ And after the Word of seynt
Austyn it is sorow of other mens Wele and Joye of other
mennys harm/ This foule synne is platly ayenst the holy
gost ¶ Al be it so that euery synne is ayenst the holy gost.
Yet for as muche as bounte appertayneth to the holy gost
properly/ And enuye cometh properly of malice/ Therfore
it is properly ayenst the bounte of the holy gost/ Now hath
malyce two spices that is to saye hardynes of herte and
Wickednes ¶ or elis the flesh of man is so blynde that he
conspyerith not that he is in synne/ Whyche is the har ¶
dynes of the deuyl/ That other spyce of enuye is Whan a
man Warrith ayenst trouthe Whan that he Woot that it is
trouth/ And eke Whan that he Warrith the grace that gody

hath yeue to his neyghebour / And al this by enuye / certes
than is enuye the werst synne that is / For sothly alle other
synnys be som tyme ayenst one specyal vertu / But certes
enuye is ayenst alle maner vertues and alle goodnes / for
it is sory of al bounte of his neyghbours / And in this
maner it is dyuerse from al synnys / For vnnethe is ther
ony synne that it ne hath som delyte in hym self saue only
enuye that euer hath in hym self anguysh and sorwe / The
spices of enuye ben thyse / Ther is first sorwe of other mens
goodnes / And of her prosperyte ought to be kyndely mater
of Joye / Thanne is enuye a synne ayenst kynde / The secondy
spice of enuye is ioye of other mens harme / Of this secondy
spice cometh bakbytyng or detraction that hath two spices
as thus / Som men preyse her neyghbour by wickedy entent
For he maketh alway a wickedy knotte atte last ende al-
way he maketh a but that is signe of moze blame than worth
is al the preysing / The secondy spice is that a man be goody
and do and saye a thing to goody entent / The bacbitar
wil tozne al the goodnes vp so doun to his shrewdy entent
The thirde is to auemise the bounte of his neyghbour / The
fourth spice of bacbityng is this that yf men speke good-
nes of a man / the bacbitar wil say / perfay yet is suche a mā
better than he / in dispreysing of hym that men preyse / The
fyfthe is to consente gladly to herkne the harm that men
spoken of other folk / this synne is ful grete and ay encre-
sith after the wickedy entent of the bacbiter / After bacby-
tyng comyth gruchyng or murmurance / And somtyme
it springeth of Impacience ayenst god & somtyme ayenst
man / Ayenst god is whan a man gruchyth agaynst the

payne of helle / or ayenst pouerte or losse of catel or ayenst
rayn or tempest / or els grucheth that shrewis haue prospe-
rite / or ellis that goody men haue aduersite / And alle these
thinges sholde men suffre pacientely / For they comyn by the
rightful Jugement and ordynance of gode / Some tyme co
mith gruchyng of auarice as Judas gruched ayenst Mag
daleyn Whan she anoynted the hede of our lorde Jhesu Crist
With her precyous oynement / This maner of murmur is
such as Whan men gruchen of goodnes / of that men hem self
done / or that other folk doon of her owen catel / Somtyme co
mith murmur of pride as Whan Symon the pharise gruchide
ayenst Magdaleyn Whan she approchide to Jhesu Crist / And
Wepte at his feet for her synnys / And somtyme it sourdeth
of enuye Whan men discouereth a mans harm that Was pryue
or herith hym on honde thing that is fals / Murmur is eke
ofte amongh seruantes Whan her souereyns bidden hem do lef
ful thingis / And for as muche as they dar not openly Withs
saye the comandement of her maister / yet Wil they saye harme
& gruche & murmure priuely for fery dispite / Whiche Wordes
men clepe the deuylles pater noster / though so be the deuyl had
neuer pater noster / but that folk yeue suche a name / somtyme
it cometh of yre or of pryue hate ꝑ norisshyth rancour in herte
as after I schal declare Thenne cometh eke bitternes of herte
Thurgh Whiche bitternes euery goody dede of his neyghbour
semyth to hym bitter & vnsauory / Than cometh discorde that
vnbindeth al maner of frendship / Thenne cometh scornyngh
of his neighbour al do he neuer so Wel / thenne cometh accusing
as Whan men seking occasion to anoye his neighbour / Whiche
that is like the craft of ꝑ deuil ꝑ Wayteth both night & day to

accuſeth vs alle/ Thenne cometh maligntye thurgh Whiche
a man noyeth his neyghbour pryuely yf he may / And yf
he nought may algate his Wicked Wil ſhal not Wante
as for to breme his hous pryuely or empoyſen hym or ſle
his beſtis and ſemblable thingis/ Now Wil I ſpeke of the
remedy of this foule ſynne of enuye / The firſt is the loue
of god principally and louyng of hym ſelf and of his
neyghbour/ For ſothly that one may not be Without that
other / And Criſt Wil in the name of thy neyghbour that
thou ſhalt vnderſtande thy broder/ For certes alle We haue
one fader fleſhly & one moder that is to ſaye Adam and
Eue/ And eke one fader ſpirytuel that is to ſaye god of
heuen/ Thy neyghbour art thou holde for to loue and Wille
hym al goodnes/ And therfor ſaith god/ loue thy neygh
bour as thy ſelf that is to ſaye to lyf and to ſoule and
ſaluacion/ And more ouer thou ſhalt loue hym in Worde &
benigne chere and monyſſhyng and chaſtiſyng in a Wys
to comforte hym & praye for hym With al thy herte/ And
in dede thou ſhalt loue hym in ſuche Wyſe that thou ſhalt do
to hym in charyte as thou Woldeſt Were done to thyn owen
pſone/ And therfore thou ſhal do to hym no domage in Wic
ked Word ne harm in his body ne in his catel ne in his
ſowle by entyſyng of Wicked enſample/ Thou ſhalt not de;
ſire his Wyf ne none of his thingis/ Vnderſtonde eke that
in the name of thy neyghbour is compreheendid his enemy
Certes a man ſhal loue his enemy for the comandement of
god / And ſothly thy frende ſhal thou loue in god/ I ſay
thyn enemye ſhal thou loue for gods ſake by his comande;
ment/ For it Were reſon a man ſholde hate his enemy/ For

ſoth god wol not receyue vs to his loue that ben his ene/
myes/ Ayenſt thre maner wrongis that his enemy doth to
hym he ſchal do thre thingis as thus/ ayenſt hate & rancour
of herte he ſchal loue hym in herte/ ayenſt chydyng and vic
kedy wordes he ſchal praye for his enemye/ ayenſt the wickedy
dede of his enemye he ſchal do hym bounte. For criſt ſaith
loueth your enemyes and praieth for hem that ſpekith you
harm and eke for hem that you chaſen and purſuen and
do bounte to hem that you haten/ Lo thus comaundeth vs
our lordy Jheſu criſt to doo to our enemyes For ſoth nature
dryueth vs to loue our frendes/ And parfey our enemyes
haue more nede to loue than our frendes/ And they that
more nede haue/ certes to hem ſchal we do goodnes/ and
certes in that dede haue remembraunce of the loue of Jheſu
criſt that dyde for his enemyes/ And for as muche as
that loue is the more greuous to perfourme/ ſo muche is
more greet the meryte/ And therfore the louyng of our
enemy hath confoundedy the venym of the deuyl/ For right
as the deuyl is ſcomfytedy by humylyte/ Right ſo is he
woundedy to the deth by the loue of our enemye/ Certis
than is loue medicyn that chaceth out the venym of en/
uye fro mannys herte.

Sequitur de Ira.

After enuye wol I declare of the ſynne of Ire For ſoth
he that hath enuye vpon his neyghbour/ anon comyn/
ly wyl fynde hym mater of wrathe in wordy or in dede/ ayenſt
hym to whom he hath enuye for ſothly he that is proudy or
enuyous is lightly wroth/ This ſynne of Ire after diſ/
criuyng of ſeynt Auſtyn is wickidy wil to be auengidy

by Word or by dede / Ire after the philosopher is the feruent
blood of may y quyckend in his herte / thurgh Whiche he
Wille harme to hym that he hateth / For certes the herte of
may by enchafyng and meuyng of his blood Wepeth so
troubled that he is out of al Jugement of resons / But ye
shul Vnderstande that Ire is in two maners / Oon of hem
is good and that other is Wicked / The good Ire is by
Jelousye of goodnes thorugh the Whiche a may is Wroth
With Wickednes and agaynst Wickednes / And therfore
saith the Wyseman that Ire is better than playe / This Ire
is With debonayrte and it is Wrath Without bitternes.
not Wroth agaynst the may / but Wroth With the mysdede
of the may as saith the prophet / Irascimim et nolite peccare
Now Vnderstonde that Wicked Ire is in two maners that
is to saye sodeyn Ire or hasty Ire Without auisement and
consentyng of his reson / The menyng and the sense of
this / is that reson of a may ne consenteth not to that so /
deyn Ire / and than is it venyal / Another Ire is that is
ful Wickid that cometh of felonye of herte auysed and
cast byfore With Wicked Wyl to do vengeance / and therto
his reson consentith and sothly this is dedely synne / This
Ire is so displaysaunt to god that it troublyth his hous
and chacyth the holy goost out of mannys soule and put
in hym the sekenes of the deuyl and benymeth the may fro
god that is his rightful lordy / This Ire is a ful gret ple /
saunce to the deuyl for it is the deuillis furneys that he en /
chaunsith With the fyre of helle / ¶ For certes as fyre is
more myghty to destroye erthly thingis than another ele /
ment / Right so ire is mighty to destroye al spirituel thingis

Loke hold that fyre of smale gledis that be almost dede vn-
der asshey Wil quycken ayen Whey they be touchid with brem
stom/Right so Ire Wil euer more quycken agayn Whan it is
touchid With pryde that is couerid in mannys herte/ For
certes fyre may not come out of nothing but yf hit Were
first in the same thing naturelly as fyre is drawen out of
flyntis With steel/Right so is pryde a mater of Ire/right
as rancour is norisshyr and kepar therof/ Ther is a maner
tre as saith seynt Isodore/ That Whan men make fyre of
that tre and couer the colis of hit With asshey/ Sothly the
fyre therof Wol laste al a yere or more/And right so fareth
it by rancour/Whan he is ones conseyned in the hertes of
sum men/Certis it Wil last peraventure from one ester day
Tyl an other or more/ But certes that man is ful ferre
from the mercy of god al that Whyle/ In this forsaid de-
uylles fornеys they forgen thre shrewis/Pryde than blow-
eth and encreceth the fyre by chydyng and Wickyd Wordes
Thenne stont enuye and holdeth the yron Upon the hertes
of men/ Wyth a payr of long tonges Wyth longe ran-
cour/ And then stont the syme of contynuel stryf and
cheest and betith and forgith the Vilayns reprouynges.
Certes this aursid synne anoieth both the man hym self &
eke his neyghbour For sothly almost al the harm that ony
man doth to his neyghbour cometh of Wrath. For certes
outrageous Wrath doth al that euer the deuyl comandeth
hym. For he spareth neyther for Crist ne his Swete moder
in his outrageous anger and Ire but spekith and sklaun
dreth his neyghbour/this is a aursid lyf Whiche lyf sholde
be debonayr and spyrytuel that sholde kepe hys sowle

Certes this Ire or Wrath hynymeth eke goddis due lord;
ship and that is mans soule and the loue of his neygh;
bours / hit stryueth alway eke ayenst trouthe / hit reueth
hym the quyete of his herte and subuertith his sowle / Of
yre comyn thyse stynkyng engendrurs / First hate that is
olde Wrath venellith / thurgh Whiche a man forsaketh his
owen frende that he hath louyd so longe / And thenne co;
myth Werre and euery maner of Wrong that a man doth
to his neyghbour in body or in Catel / Of this cursid synne
of Ire cometh eke manslaghter / And vnderstandeth Wel
that manslaghter is in dyuerse Wyse / Some maner of
manslaughter is spirytuel / And some bodely / Spirytuel
manslaghter is in sixe thingis ¶ First by hate as saith
seynt John / he that hateth his broder is an homicyde / Man;
slaghter is eke by bacbytyng of Whiche bacbitours saith
Salamon that they haue two swerdis Wyth Whyche they
sle her neyghbours / For sothly as Wickid it is to benyme
his good name as his lyf / homicyde is eke in yeuyng of
Wickyd counceyl by fraude / or for to yeue counceyl for to
areyse Wrongful customs and talagis of Whiche speketh
Salamon / Lyon wryngh and bere hungry ben likenyd
to cruel lordis / in Withholdyng or abreggyng of the hyre
or Wagis of poure folk / For Whiche the Wyseman saith /
Fede ye hym that almoste deyeth for hunger / For sothly
but yf thou fede hym thou sleest hym / And al thyse ben
dedely synnys / Bodely manslaughter is Whan thou sleest
hym With thy tunge / Another maner is Whan thou cõman
dest to sle a man / or ellis yeuyst hym counceyl to sle a man
Manslaughter in dede is in foure maners / That one is by

lalbe / right as a Justyse dampneth hym that is aulpable
to the deth / but lete the Justyse beWaar that he do it right-
fully And that he do it not for delite to spylle bloody but
for kepyngh of rightWisnes / Another homicyde is doy for
necessyte as Whan a may sleeth another hys defendaunt
and that he ne may other Wyse escape fro his owen deth +
But certayn and he may escape Withoute slaughter of
his aduersarye and sleeth hym he doth synne / and he
shal bere penaunce as for dedely synne / Eek yf a may by
caas or auenture shete an arowe or cast a stoon With Which
he sleeth a may it is homicyde / Eke yf a Woman by neg-
lygence ouer lyeth her chylde in slepyngh / it is homicyde
and dedely synne / Eke Whan a may destroyeth concep-
cion of a childe or makyth a Woman bareyne by drynkes
of kenymous herbis thurgh Whiche she may not conceyue
Or sleeth her chylde by drynkis / or elles putteth certayn
materyal thyngh in her secrete place to sle her chylde / or
elles doth vnkynde synne / by Whiche may or Woman she-
deth his nature in place ther as a childe may not be con-
ceyued / or elles yf a Woman haue conceyued and hurt
her self and sleeth her chylde / yet is it homicyde / What
saye We eke of Women that murdren her childeren for drede
of Worldly shame Certes it is eke an horryble homycyde
Eke yf a may approche to a Woman by despyte of lecherye
thurgh Whiche the childe is perysshed ellys smyteth a Wo
man Wetyngly by Whyche her chylde is slayn / Alle thyse
ben homycydes and dedely horryble synnys / yet ommyn of
Ire many mo synnys as In Word in thought in dede as
Wel as he that aretteth vpon godd or blasphemyth godd

of Whiche he is hym ſelf gilty or diſpiſeth god and alle his halowis as don thyſe curſid hafourdours in diuerſe con trees / This curſed ſynne do they Whan they feleh in her herte ful Wickedly of god and his halowis / Alſo Whan they tretyn vnworthyly the ſacrament of the awter / Thilk ſynne is ſo greete / that vnneth may it be releced but that the mercy of god paſſyth his Werkis / Whyche mercy is greete and benygne / Ther cometh alſo of Ire a fery anger Whan a man is ſharply amoneſſhed in his ſhryfte to forlete his ſynne / Than Wil he be angry and anſWere ho / kirkly & angerly to defende or excuſyn his ſynne / by vnſted / faſtnes of his fleſh / or ellis he dyde hit for to holde company With his felaWs / or ellis he ſaith / the fende entiſed hym + or ellis he dyde hit for his yongth / or els his complexion is ſo corageous that he may not forbere / ellis it is deſtyne as he ſaith vnto a certayn age / or ellis he ſaith it compth hym of gentilnes of his auncetrys and ſemblable thingis Alle thyſe maner of folk ſo Wrappen hem in her ſynnys that they Wil not delyuer hem ſelf ¶ For ſothly no Wight that excuſith hym Wilfully of his ſynne / may be deliuerd of his ſynne / til he mekely beknoWeth his ſynne / After theme cometh ſWerynge that is expres ayenſt the comaun / dement of god and this befallyth of anger and of Ire. God ſaith thou ſhalt not take the name of thy lord in ydil / Alſo our lord Jheſu Criſt ſaith by the Word of ſeynt mathew / ne Wille ye to ſWere in alle maner / neyther by he / uen for hit is goddis Trone / neyther by erthe for it is the benche of his feet / ne by Jheruſalem / for it is the Cyte of a greete kynge / ne by thyn hede / for thou ne maiſt make an

ſeer Whyte ne blacke/but your oth ſchal be ye/ye/nay/nay.
And What that is more euyl/thus ſaith Criſt For criſtes
ſake ſWere ye not ſo ſynfully in diſmembryng of Criſt.
by ſoule/herte/bonys/and body. For ye thinke that the
curſid Jewis diſmembrid hym not ynowh but ye diſmem
bre hym more/And yf ſo be the lawe compelle you to ſWere
therme reWle you after the lawe of god in your ſWerynge
As ſaith ſeynt Jherome the.iiij.chapitre Thou ſchalt kepe
thre condicions Thou ſchalt ſWere in trouth/in dome/and
in rightWiſnes This is to ſaye thou ſchalt ſWere ſoth For
euery leſing is ayenſt Criſt/for criſt is very trouthe/And
thinke Wel this that euery grete ſWerer not compellid laW
fully to ſWere the plaghe of vengeance ſchal not parte from
his hous Whiles he vſeth ſuche vnlaWful ſWering Thou ſchalt
eke ſWere in dome Wherme thou art compellid by thy domes
man to Witneſſe the trouthe/Eke thou ſchalt not ſWere for
enuye/for fauour/for mede/but for rightWiſnes for declaring
of trouth to the Worſhip of god & to helpyng of thyn euen
criſten/And therfore euery man that taketh godes name
in ydle or falſly ſWerith With his mouth/or ellis taketh on
hym the name of Criſt to be a callid a Criſten man & liueth
ayenſt criſten liuyng & his techinge/alle they take goddis
name in ydle/Loke eke What ſaith ſeynt Petir Actuum
quarto/Ther is none other name vnder heuen yeuen to man
in Whiche they moot be ſauyd/That is to ſaye but in the
name of Jheſu Criſt/Take kepe eke hou that precyous na
me of Jheſu Criſt As ſaith ſeynt Poule at philipenſes cc
In nomine Jheſu cc/That in the name of Jheſu euery
kne of heuenly creature or erthely or of helle ſholde bowey.

For hit is so high and so worshipful that the worsly fende
in helle sholde tremble for to here it named / Thay semeth
it that men that swere so horribly his blessid name that
they despyse it more boldly than dyde the cursid Jewys that
tremeleden whan they herde his name / Now certes sith that
swerynge but it be do al lawfully is so hoolly defended muche
werse is for to swere falsely and eke nedeles / What saye we
eke of them that delyten them in swerynge and holde it a
gentrye or manly dede to swere grete othis / And what of
hem that of very vsage ne cesse not to swere grete othes /
Al the cause not worth a straw / Certes this is horryble
synne / Swerynge also without auisement is eek synne.
But late vs goo now to that cursid and horrible swerynge
of adiuracion and coniuracion as don thyse fals encharm-
tours and nygromanceres in basyns ful of water / or in a
bright swerd / in a cercle or in a fyre / or in a sholdre bon
of a sheep I can not saye but they do cursidly and dampna
bly ayenst Crist and al the faith of holy chirche / What saye
by them that bileuyn in dym naylis as by flight or by noyse
of birdis e of beestis or by sorte / by nygromancye / by dremes
By chirchynge of wormis by gnawynge of ratis or crakynge
of housis and suche maner of wrecchidnes / Certis alle this
thinge is defendid by god and eke holy chirche / for whiche
they be cursid til they come to amendement / that on suche
fylthe sette their byleue / Charmys for woundis and mala-
dyes of men or of beestis / yf they take ony effect / it may be
perauenture that god suffreth it / for men sholde gyue the
more feith and reuerence to his name / Now wil I speke
of lesynges whiche generally is fals signification of word

With entent to diſceyue his euen Criſten/Som leſing ther
is of Whiche cometh none auauntage to no Wight/And
ſom leſing torneth to the eſe and prouffit of a man and to
domage of another man/Another leſing for to ſaue his liff
or catel/Another leſing comyth of delyte/They Wil forge
a long tale and peynte it With al circumſtancis Wherof
alle the ground is fals/Some leſing comyth for he Wil
ſuſteyne his Word/And ſome leſing comyth of rechelif=
nes Withouten auyſement and ſemblable thingis/Lete vs
nolb tolloche the Vice of flaterye/Whiche comyth not gladly
but for drede or for couetyſe. Flaterye is generally Wrong=
ful prayſing/Flaterers ben the deuillis norices that noriſſh
his children With the mylk of loſengery/For ſoth ſaith
Salamon that flaterye is Worſe than detraction. For ſom=
tyme detraction makith an haunteyn man be the more hum
ble for he dredeth detraction/But certayn flaterye maketh
a man to enhaunce his herte & his contenaunce/Flaterers
ben the deuilles enchantours for they maken a man to Wenyn
hym ſelf be like/that he is not like/They be like Judas that
betraid god/And thyſe flaterers betraye a man to ſelle
hym to his enemy that is the deuil/Flaterers ben the deuillis
chapelleyns that ſyngen euer placebo/I reken flaterye in
Vices of yre/For ofte tyme yf a man be Wroth With another
Thenne Wil he flatere ſom Wight to ſuſtene him in his qua=
rell/Speke We nolb of ſuche curſing as comith out of yrous
hertes/Maliſon may be ſaid generally euery maner power
of harm/ſuche curſyng bereueth a man the regne of god
As ſaith ſeynt Paule/And ofte ſuche curſyng Wrong=
fully rebozneth ayen to hym that curſyth/As a bird

retorneth agayn to his owen neste/ And ouer alle thinge
men ought teschewe to curse her childrem and to yeue to the
deuyl her engendrure as ferforth as in hem is/ Certis it is
a grete paryl and a grete synne/ Lete vs therme speke of
chydynge and repreuynge Whyche ben grete Woundis in
mannys herte/ for certes Somethe may a man be plainly ac
corded With hym that he hath openly reuyled/ reprouyd
and disclaundrid this is a ful grisly synne/ as Crist saith
in the gospel/ And take ye kepe now that he that reprouith
his neyghbour by som harme or by some peyne that he hath
in his body/ as mesil/ croked harlot/ or by sum signe that
he doth/ Now yf he repreuyth hym by harm of peyne/ therme
retorneth the repref to Jhesu Crist/ For peyne is sent by
the ryghtwys sonde of god and by his suffraunce/ be it
meselerye or mayme or maladye/ And yf he repreue hym
vncharitably of synne/ thou holour/ thou dronkelew harlot
and so forth therme appertayneth it to reioysynge of the
deuyl that euer hath ioye that men do synne/ And certes
chydynge may not come but of vilens herte/ For after ha-
boundaunce of the herte speketh the mouth ful ofte/ And
ye shul vnderstande Whan ony man chastiseth another that
he be waar fro chidynge or repreuynge/ For trewly but he
be waar he may ful lightly quycken the fyre of anger and
of wrath Whiche that he shal not quenche/ and pauenture
sleeth hym that he myght chastyse With benignyte/ For as
saith Salamon/ The amyable tonge is the tre of lyf/ that
is to saye of lyf spirytuel/ And a dissaue tonge sleeth
the spirytis of hym that is reprouyd/ Lo What saith seynt
Austyn/ Ther is no thynge like the deuylis childe as he

that ofte chideth ¶ Seynt Poule saith eek ¶ I seruaunt of
god behoue not to chide / And holde that chidyng is a vileyns
thyng betwixt alle maner folk / yet is hit certes most vn
couenable betwix a man and his wyf ¶ For there is neuer
reste / And therfore saith Salamon / Ay hous that is vn
couerd in rayn and droppyng / and a chidyng wyf be like
a man that is in a droppyng hous in many placis ¶ though
he eschue the droppyng in one place / hit droppeth on hym in
another place / So farith it by a chydyng wyf but she chide
hym in one place she wyl chyde hym in another place ¶
And therfore better is a morsel breed with ioye / than
an hous ful of delytes With chydyng ¶ Lo What Sala /
mon and seynt Paule sayn ¶ O ye women be ye subgettis
to your husbondis as behoueth in god ¶ And ye men
loue your wyuys ¶ Afterward speke we of scornyng
Whyche is a wicked synne and namely Whan he scornyth
a man by his good werkis ¶ For certes suche scorners
faren lyke the foule tode that may not endure to smelle the
swete sauour of the vyne Whan it florissheth ¶ Thyse scor /
ners ben partyng felaws with the deuyl for they haue
ioye Whan the deuyl wynneth and sorow Whan he lesith.
They be aduersaryes to Jhesu Crist For they hatyn that
he loueth that is to saye sauacion of soule ¶ Speke we
nowe of the wicked counceyl For he that wickyd coun /
ceyl yeuyth is a treytour ¶ For he disceyueth hym that
trusteth in hym ¶ But natheles yet is wicked coun /
ceyl first ayenst hym self ¶ For as saith the wyse man.
Euery fals lyuyng hath his proprete in hym self ¶ For
he that wil anoye another may anoieth first hym self.

Andy men ſhal vnderſtande that a man ſhal not take his
counceyl of falſe folk ne of angry folk or greuous folk ne
of folke that louen ſpecially to muche her owen prouffyt/ne
to muche Wordly folk & namely in counceylyng of foolis/
Nowe comyth the ſynne of hem that maken diſcordy among
folk/Whiche is a ſynne that Criſt hateth vtterly/Andy
no Wonder is/for he deyde for to make concorde/Andy more
ſhame doy they to Criſt than dyde they that hym Crucyfyedy
For godi loueth better that frendſhip be among folk than
he dyde his owen body Whiche he yaf for vnyte/Therfore be
they likenyd to the deuyl that euer is aboute to make diſ-
corde/Nowe comyth the ſynne of double tunge ſuche as ſpeke
fair beforn men andy Wickedly behynde/or ellis they make
ſemblaūt as though they ſpeken of goody entencion/or ellis
in game andy pley/andy they ſpeken of Wickedy entente.
Nowe comyth the Wreyyngy of counſeil/thurgh Whiche mā
is defamedy/vnnethis may he reſtore the domage/Nowe co-
myth manace that is an open foly/For he that openly me-
naceth he threteneth more than he may ouercome ful ofte
tyme/Nowe comen ydle Wordis that be Withoute prouffit
of hym that ſpeketh the Wordes andy eke of hym that her-
kenyth the Wordes/Or ellis ydle Wordes ben tho that ben
nedeles or Withoute entent of naturel prouffit/Andy al be
hit that ydle Wordes be ſomtyme venyal ſynne/yet ſhal men
doubte hem ¶For We ſhal yeue rekenyng of hem bifore
godi/Nowe comyth Jangelingy that may not come With-
oute ſynne as ſaith Salamon/it is a ſigne of appert folye
Andy therfore a philoſopher ſayde Whan a man axidy hym
how men ſholdy pleſe/Andy he anſWerde do many goody

werkis & spekē selue Jangelyngis / After this cometh the
the synne of Japers that ben the deuillis apis For they make
folk to laughe at her Japerye / as folk doon atte galdes of an
ape Suche Japis defendeth saint Poule Loke holde that vertu
ous wordes & holy comforten hem that trauayleyn the seruise
of Crist / Right so comforten the vileyns wordes & the knac /
kis of Japers hem that trauayleyn in the seruise of the deuil
Alle thyse ben the synnys of the tunge that comyn of Ire
and of other synnys ¶ The remedye ayenst Ire is a vertu
that clepen manswetude that is debonairte / and eke another
vertu that men clepen pacience / Seynt Jherome saith thus
of debonairte that it doth harm to no wight ne saith none
harm that men hym do ne seyn ne chongeth not ayenst reson
This vertu cometh somtyme of nature For as saith ỹ philo
sopher a man is a quyk thing by nature debonair & tretable
by goodnes But whan debonairte is enfourmed of grace it
is the more worthy / Pacience is another remedye ayenst yre &
is a vertu ỹ men suffre suetely euery mānes goodnes / and is
not wroth for none harme ỹ is doon to hym / The philosopher
saith / that pacience is that vertu that suffreth debonarly al ỹ
outrage of aduersite / & euery wicked word / This vertu ma
keth a man like to god & maketh hym his owen dere child ¶
as saith crist this vertu discōfiteth thin enemye And therfore
saith the wise man yf thou wolt vemquysche thin enemye see ỹ
thou be pacient / Suffrāce is another vertu ayenst Ire / and
that is whan he suffreth swetly alle anoyance & the wrongis
that men do a man outward / Thou shalt vnderstande that
a man suffreth iiij maner of greuāncis in outward thingis
Ayenst which foure he must haue foure maner of pacience ¶

The firste greuance is wickidy wordes/that greuaunce suf
frydy Jhesu Crist without grutchyng wel paciently whan
the Jewes despisedy hym andy reprouedy hym ful ofte/Suf
fre thou therfore paciently/ for the wyse man saith yf thou
stryue with a fool/yf the fool be wroth or though he laugh
Algate thou shalt haue no reste That other greuance out/
wardy is to haue domage of thy catel/ There ayenst suf/
frydy Crist ful paciently whan he dispoylidy was of alle that
euer he hady in this lyf & that nas but clothis/ The thirde
greuance is to a man to haue greuance in his body/that suf
frydy Crist ful paciently in al his passion/ The fourthe gre
uance is in outrageous labour in werkis/ Wherfore I saye
that folk yt makey her seruantes to trauayle to greuously
out of tyme as in holy dayes/sothly they do gret synne/here
ayenst suffredy cryst ful paciently andy taught vs pacience
whan he bare vpon his blessidy sholdres the crosse vpon which
he sholdy suffre despitous deth / here may men lerne to be pa
cienty/ For certes not only cristen men be pacient for the loue
of Jhesu Crist andy for guerdon of the blysse of heuen andy
of the blessydy lyf that is perdurable/ But certes the olde
paynems that neuer were crystendy commendidy andy vsydy
the vertu of pacience/ A philosophre vpon a tyme that wolde
haue betey his disciple for his grete trespaas/for whiche he
was gretly ameuydy andy brought a yerdy to scourge the
childy/ Andy whan the childy salue the yerdy he saidy to his
maister/ What wil ye doo/ I wil bete the quod the maister
for thy correction/ For soth quod the childy ye ought first
correcte your self that haue lost your pacience for the gilt of
a childy/ For soth saidy the maister al wepyng thou saist

ſoth haue thou the yerdy my dere ſone andy correcte me for
myn vnpacience / Of pacience comith obedience thurgh Which
a man is obedyent to Criſt andy to alle hem to Whyche he
ought to be obedyent in Criſt ¶ Andy vnderſtande wel that
obedyence is parfight Whan men do gladly & haſtely With
goody herte entierly al that he ſholdy do / Obedyence gene-
rally is to perfourme the doctryne of gody andy to his ſo-
uereyns to Whiche hym ought to be obeyſſant in al right-
wyſnes ✣

Sequitur de Accidia ✣

After the ſyme of Wrath I Wil ſpeke of the ſyme of
accidye or ſlouth ✣ For enuye blyndeth the herte of
man / Andy Ire troubleth a man / Andy accidye maketh hym
heuy thoughtful andy Wralwe / Enuye andy Ire makey bitter
nes in herte / Whiche bitternes is moder of accidye & benymeth
hym the loue of al goodnes ¶ Therme is accidye the angre of
a truble herte ¶ Andy ſaynt Auſtyn ſaith It is annoye of
goodnes andy annoye of harm / Certes this is a dampnable
ſyme ✣ For it doth Wronge to Jheſu Criſt in as muche as
he benymeth the ſeruiſe that men ought to do to Jheſu Criſt
With al diligence As ſaith Salamon / But accidye doth
none ſuche diligence ¶ He doth alſo With annoye & Wralwnes
Slaknes / excuſacion / dulnes & vnluſt ✣ For Whiche the book
ſaith a curſidy be he that doth the ſeruiſe of god necligently ✣
Therme is accidye enemye to euery eſtate of mā For the eſtate
of mā is in iij ✣ maners / Eyther it is eſtate of Jnocence as
Was ỳ ſtate of adam before or that he fyl in to ſyme in Which
eſtate he Was holde to Worche as in herīng & adouring of god
Another eſtate is eſtate of ſupfluyte / In Whiche eſtate men

he holdeth to laboure in prayng to god for amendement of her synnys / Another estate is in the estate of grace / In Whiche estate is he holden to do Werkis of penytence / And certes to alle these thingis is accidye enemye and contrary for he loueth no besynes at all / Nott certes this foule synne of accidye is eke a ful gret enemy to ỹ liuelod of the body For it hath no purueance ayenst temporel necessite / For it is slouthyd and forsloggid and destroyeth al goodes temporel by recheliesnes / The fourth thyng is that accidye is lyke hem that ben in the peyne of helle be cause of slouthe & of her heuynes / For they that be dampned be so bounde that neyther may they doo Wel ne thynke Wel / Of accidye cometh first that a man is anoyd & encombrid to doo ony goodnes and maketh that god hath abhominacion of suche accidye as saith seynt John / Nott cometh slouthe that Wil suffre no hardnes ne no penance / For soth slouth is so delicate and so tendre as saith Salamon that he Wil suffre non hardnes ne penance and therfore he shendeth al that he doth Ayenst this wotyn horyd syme of accidye or slouthe shold men exercyse hem to doo goody Werkis and manly and vertuously cacchen corage Wel to doo / Thynkyng that our lord Jhesu Crist quytith euery good dede be it neuer so litil Wsage of it is a grete thinge / For it makyth as sayth seynt Bernard the laborer to haue stronge armys and hard synewis / and slouth makith hem feble and tendre Than comyth drede for to begynne to Werke ony good Werkis / For certes he that is inclined to synne hym thinketh it is to grete an empryse for to vndertake to doo Werkis of goodnes as saith seynt Gregore / Nott comyth Wanhope

that is dispair of the mercy of god that comyth somtyme of to muche outrageous sorow and somtyme of mykyl drede ymagenyng that he hath do so muche that it wold not auaylle hym though he wold repente hym and do good. thurgh which dispeyr or drede / he habundeth his herte to euery maner synne As saith seynt Austyn / which that is dampnalle yf it contynue to his ende / hit is cle= ped symyng in the holy goste / This horryble synne is so perylous that he that is dispeyred that ther is no felonye ne no synne that he doubtyth for to do as shewd wel by Judas / Certes themne aboue alle is this synne most dis= playsaunt and most aduersary to Crist / Certes he that dispeyreth is lyke the cowardy champyon recreaunt & nede= les dispeyreth / For certes the mercy of god is euer redy to the penitent / hit is aboue al his werkis / Alas can not a man bethynke hym on the gospel of saynt luke / Luce xv° Where as Crist saith that as wel shal ther be more ioye in heuen vpon a sinful man that doth penitence than vpon nyenti and nyne rightful men that neden no penitence / loke ferther in the gospel the ioye and the feestis of the good man that had lost his sone / when his sone with repentaunce was re= torned to his fader / Can they not remembre eke as saith saint luke xxiij°. How that the theef that was honged beside Jhesu / Sayde lord remembre on me when thou comest to thy Regne / forsoth said Crist / this day shalt thou be with me in paradys / Certes ther is none so horrible synne of man that ne may in his lif be distroied by penitence thurgh vertu of ỹ passion of Crist / Alas what nedeth man thenne to be dispey red sithen his mercy is so redy / aske & haue / Thenne cometh

ſompnolence that is ſluggy ſlumbrynge Whycke makith a
man to be heuy andꝫ dul in body andꝫ in ſowle/ Andꝫ this
ſynne comyth of ſlouthe/ Andꝫ certes the tyme as by Weye
of reſon men ſholdꝫ not ſlepe that is by the morow but yf
it Were cauſe reſonable/ For ſothe in the morow is moſt co-
uenable a man to ſaye his prayers andꝫ forꝫ to thynke on
godꝫ andꝫ to honoure godꝫ andꝫ to yeue almes to the poure
that firſt comeꝫ in the name of Criſt/ Lo What Salamon
ſaith / Who ſo Wil by the morow aWake to ſeke me he ſhal
fynde me/ Thenne comeꝫth negligence or rechelesnes that rec
keth of no thyngꝫ / Andꝫ holdꝫ that ignorance is moder of
alle harme/ Certes negligence is the norice / negligence doth
no forꝫ Whan he ſhal do a thingꝫ Whether he do it Wel or badly
Of the remedy of thyſe tWo ſynnys as ſaith the Wiſeman
that he that dredeth godꝫ ſpareth not to doo that hym ought
to doo / andꝫ he that louyth godꝫ Wil do diligence to pleſe
godꝫ by his Werkis andꝫ haboundeꝫ hym ſelf With al his
myght Wel forꝫ to doo / Thenne comyth ydlenes that is the
yate of alle harmys an ydle man is lyke to a place that hath
no Wallis the deuyl may entre on euery ſyde/ This ydlenes
is the thurwok of alle vilayns andꝫ Wickidꝫ thoughtis andꝫ
of alle Janglis/ tryfflis & al ordure / Certes heuen is yeuen
to hem that Wil laboure andꝫ not to ydle meꝫ / Eke dauid
ſaith / That they be not in the labour of meꝫ ne they ſhal
not be Whippedꝫ With meꝫ that is to ſaye in purgatorye .
Certes thenne ſemyth it they ſhal be tormentidꝫ With the
deuyl in helle/ but yf they do penytence / Thenne comyth the
ſynne that meꝫ clepe tarditas as Whan a man it ſo lettydꝫ
andꝫ ſo taryedꝫ or he Wil turne to godꝫ andꝫ certes that is

a grete folye / he is lyke hym that fallith in the diche and
Wil not aryse / And this vice comyth of fals hope that
he thynketh that he shal lyue longe but that hope faylleth
ful ofte / Thenne comyth laches that is he that Whan he be-
gynneth ony goody Werk anon he Wil forlete hit and stynte
as do they that haue ony Wyght to gouerne and take of
hym no kepe / Anone as they fynde ony contrary or ony
anoye / Thyse bey the nelbe shepherdes that letey her sheep
Wytyngly go renne to the Wolf that is in the breris and do
no force of her olbey gouernance / Of this comyth pouerte
and destruction both of spirytuel and temporel thingis.
Thenne cometh a maner of coldnes that fresith al the herte
of man / Thenne comyth vndeuocion thurgh Whiche a man
is so blont As saith seynt Bernard and hath suche lan
gour in his soule that he ne may rede ne synge in holy chirche
ne here ne thynke of deuocion ne trauaylle With his hon-
des in no goody Werke but it is to hym vnsauery and al
apallidy thenne Wepith he fore sluggish and slumbry and
soon Wil he be Wroth and soon is enclyned to hate and
to enuye / And thenne comyth the tyme of Worldly so-
row / that is cleped Tristicia / that sleeth a man as seith
seynt paule / For certes suche forow Werkith to the deth of
the sowle and of the body also. For therof comyth that a
man is anoyed of his olbey lif for suche forowe shortith the
lif of many a man or that his tyme come by Way of kynde
Ayenst this horryble tyme of acidye and the braunchis
of the same ther is a vertu that is callid fortitudo or streng
the that is affectyon thurgh Whyche man dyspyseth al
other thyngis noyous /. Thys vertu is so myghty

and so bigorous that it dar withstande myghtily and
wraſtle ayenſt the ſalwes of the deuyl and wiſely kepe him
ſelf fro perils that ben wicked / For it enhaunſith and
enforſith the ſowle / right as acidye abatith it and maketh
it feble For this fortitudo may endure with longe ſuffrance
the traueyllis that ben couenable / This vertu hath many
ſpicis the firſt is clepid magnanymyte that is to ſaye grete
corage / For certes ther behoueth grete corage ayenſt acidye
leeſt that it ſwalowe the ſowle by the ſymme of ſorowe or diſ /
troye it with wanhope / This maketh folk to vndertake
hardy and greuous thingis by her owen witt wiſely and
reſonably / And for as muche as the deuyl fightith ayenſt
man more by queyntyſe and by ſleyght than by ſtrength
therfore a man ſchal withſtande hym by wit by reſon and
by diſcrecion / Therme ben ther the vertues of feyth and hope
in god and in his ſaintis to achyeuen and compliſſhe the
good werkis in whiche he purpoſith fermly to contynue .
Therme cometh ſewrte and ſikerneſſe / and that is whan
a man doth and pfourmeth grete werkis of goodnes that
he hath begunne / And that is the ende why men ſchold do
good werkis / For in the compliſſhyng of good werkis
lieth the grete guerdon / Therme is the conſtance that is ſta
blenes of corage / and thys ſchold be in herte by ſtedfaſt
feyth and in mouth and in beryng / in chere and in dede
Eke ther ben mo ſpeciall thingis and remedies ayenſt acci
dye in diuerſe werkis & in conſideracion of the peyne of helle
and of the ioye of heuen / And in truſt of the grace of the
holy gooſt that wil yeue hym might to pfourme his entent

. Sequitur de Auaricia .

After acidye nolb Wil I speke of auarycc and of o
uetyse of Whiche syme saith seynt Poule / The wte
of alle syme is ouetyse ¶ For sothly Whan the herte of a
man is confoundedy in hit self andy troblidy andy that the
soule hath lost the comfort of godi ¶ Theme seketh he ay
ydle solas of Worldy thmgis / Auarycc after descripcion of
seynt Austyn is a lichorousnes in herte to haue erthely thm
gis / Some other folke saye that auarycc is for to purchace
many erthly thyngis / andy nothyngh yeue to hem that haue
nede / Andy Inderstande Wel that auarycc is not oonly in
goody & in catel / but sumtyme in science & in glorye & in euery
outrageous thmgis is auaricc & ouetyse / Andy the diffe-
rencc bitwene auaricc andy ouetyse is this / Couetyse is for
to oueyte suche thmgis as thou hast not / andy auaricc is to
Withholde & to kepe suche thmgis as thou hast Without right
ful nede / Sothly this auarycc is a syme ful dampnable
for al holy Wryt curseth hit & speketh ayenst hit for it doth
Wrongh to Jhesu Crist. For hit bereuyth fro hym the loue
that men to hym owen andy bozneth hit backwardy ayenst al
reson andy makyth that the auarous man hath more hope
in his catel than in Jhesu Crist. Andy therfore saith seynt
Paule / that an auarous man hath more hope in his thral-
dom of ydolatrye than in godi / What difference is betwix
an ydolastre & an auarycious man / pauenture an ydolastre
hath but on maubmet or two / And the auaricious man hath
many For certes euery floreyn in his cofre is his maubmet.
And certes the syme of maubmetrie god forbedeth in ỳ ten co
mandemẽts as bereth Witnes Exo. xx c°. Thou shalt haue no
false goddis bifory me ne ỳ shalt make to ỳ no grauid thing

But ay Auaricious may loueth moze his treſour forgid
And thurgh this ſyme of auarice and of Couetyſe co=
myth thyſe hardy lordſchippis thozugh Whiche mey be ſtrey=
ned by talagis auſtoms and cariagis moze thay her dute
oz reſon is/oz els take they of her bonde mey amercementis
Whiche myght moze reſonably be callyd extorſions thay
amercementis / Of Whiche amercementis & raunſonyngis
of bonde mey ſom̄e lozdis ſtywardis ſayn that it is right=
ful/foz as mykyl as a chorle hath no temporel thing that
it ne is his lozdis as they ſayn / But certis thyſe lozd=
ſchips doy Wronge that bereuen her bonde folke thinges that
they neuer yaf hem/ Auguſtinus de Ciuitate dei libzo. iy°.
Sayth that ſoth is that the condicyon of thraldom and
the firſt cauſe of thraldom is foz ſynne/Geneſis. b°. thus
may ye ſee that the gilte deſerueth thraldom and not na=
ture/ Wherfoze thyſe lozdes ſholdy not glozye hem in her lozd
ſchippis/ſith that by naturel condicion they be not lozdis of
her thrallis / but that thraldom com firſt by ſynne / Andy
ferthermoze ther as the lawe ſayth that temporel lozdes of
bonde folk ben the goodes of her lozdſchippis / ye that is foz
to Underſtonde the goodis of the emperour to defende hem in
her right but not to robbe hem ne to reue hem / Andy ther=
foze ſayth Seneca / Thy prudence ſholdy lyue benygnely
With thy thral/that thou clepeſt thy thral ben goddis peple
For humble folk ben cryſtes frendes / they be contubernyal
With the lozdy / Now cometh diſceyt betwene marchaunt
andy marchaunt/Andy thou ſhalt Underſtande that mar=
chandyſe is in many maners / That one is bodily andy
that other is gooſtly / that one is leſſful / Andy that other

is dishoneſt and vnleefful / That bodily-marchandyſe
that is leefful and honeſt is this / that there as gody
hath ordeynd that a Royame or a contre is ſuffycyent
to hym ſelf it is honeſt and leefful that the habondance
of this contre may helpe another contre that is more ne=
deful ¶ And therfore ther muſte be marchandyſe to
bryngе from on contre to another their marchandyſe /+
That other marchandiſe is that men haunten falſe othis
with fraude trecherye and diſceyt With leſyngis aurſid
and dampnable / Spirytuel marchandyſe is properly ſy
monye / that is ententyf deſire to thingis ſpirytuel / that
is thing that appertayneth to the ſeyntuary of gody and
to cure of ſolble / This deſyre yf ſo be that a man do his
dyligence to perfourme hit / al be it that his deſyre take
non effect / yet is it to hym a dedely ſyme / and yf he be
ordryd he is Irreguler /+ Certes ſymonye is clepyd of
Symon Magus that Wold by temperall catell haue
bought the yeft that gody had yeuen by the holy goſt to
ſeynt Petir and to the apoſtlis / And therfore vnder=
ſtonde ye that both he that ſellith and he that byeth thin
ges ſpyrytuel ben clepyd ſymonyaks / be it catel be it
procuryng or by fleſſhly prayers of his frendes or of ſpi=
rytuel frendis /+ Fleſſhly in two maners as by kynred
and by other frendis / ſothly yf they pray for hym that
is not able ne Worthy / it is ſymonye yf he take the bene
fyce / And yf he be Worthy and able it is none / That
other maner is Whan men or Women prayen for folke to
auance hem only for Wicked fleſſhly affection that they
haue to the perſones / that is foul ſymonye / But certis

in seruyse for Whiche men yeue thingis spirytuel vnto her
seruauntis it muste be vnderstande that the seruyse be ho-
nest or els not/And eke that it be Without barganyng
and that the persone be able/For as saith saynt Damas
Alle the symys of the Worlde at regarde of this symonye
as thingis of nought/For it is the gretteste symme that may
be after the syme of lucifer and of antichryst/For by this
symme godis forlesith the chirche and the soule that he bought
With his precyous blood by hem that yeuyn chirchis to hem
that be not digne/For they put in theuys that stelyn the
soulis of Jhesu Crist and distroye his patrymonye/By
suche vndigne preestis and curates haue men the lesse reue
rence of the sacramentis of holy chirche/And suche yeuers
of chirchis put out the childrein of Crist and put in to the
chirchis the deuyllis owen childrein/They selleyn the soules
that shal kepe the lambis to the Wolf that strangle hem/
And therfore shal they neuer haue parte of the pasture of
lambis that is the blisse of heuen/Now comyth hasardrye
With his appertenauntis as tablis/quardes and reuellis.
of Whiche comyth disceyt false othis/chidyngis/and alle
raueyns/blasfemyngis/reynyng of god/hate of his neygh
bours/Wast of goodis/myspendyng of tyme/And some
tyme manslaghter/Certes hasardours may not be With
oute grete syme Whyles they hauntyn that craft/Of aua-
rice comyth eke/lesyngis/thefte/fals Witnes/and false
othis/And ye shal vnderstande that these ben grete symys
and expres ayenst the comandements of god as I haue saidy
Fals Witnes is eke in Wordy and in dede/In Wordy as to
byreue thy neyghbours goody name by thy fals Witnessyng

or accuseſt hym by thy falſ Witnes/or ellis excuſeſt thy ſelf falſely/Ware ye queſtmongers and notaryes/Certes for fals Witnes was ſuſamme in grete ſorowe and peyne and many another mo¶The ſynne of theſte is expreſſe alſo a-yenſt godes heeſt¶And that in two maners¶tempoel & ſpirytuel/The tempoel theft is as for to take thy neygh-bours catel ayenſt his Wil be it by fors or by ſleyght be it in metyng or meſure¶by ſtelyng by falſe endytements vpon hym/and in borowyng thy neyghbours catel in en-tent neuer to paye and ſemblable thingis/Spirytuel theſte is ſacrylege that is to ſaye ontyng of holy thyngis¶or of thyngis ſacryd to Criſt in two maners¶by reſon of the holy place/As chirchis and chircheyerdis for euery violent ſynne that men do in ſuche places may be clepid ſacrylege.¶Alſo they that falſely Withholde the righees of holy chirche.¶And pleyn and generally ſacrylege is to reue holy thing out of holy place¶or vnholy thyng out of holy place/or holy thyng out of vnholy place/Now ſchal ye vnderſtande that releuyng of auarice is Myſerycorde and pite large-ly taken¶And men myght aye Why that myſerycorde and pite is releuyng of auarice¶Certes the auaricyous may ſchewith no pite ne myſerycorde to the nedeful man.¶For he delitith hym in kepyng of his treſour/and not in the reſcowyng ne in the releuyng of hys euen cryſten/¶And therfore ſpeke I firſt of myſericorde¶Thenne is my-ſericorde As ſaith the philoſophre a vertu by Whiche corage of man is ſtyred by the myſeſe of hym that is myſeſid¶vpon the Whiche myſerycorde Wyth pite in perfourmyng of Charytable Werkis of mercy helpeth and comforteth

hym that is myseſed/ And certes this meueth men to the miſericorde of Jheſu Criſt that hym ſelf ſuffrid for our gilt He ſuffrydy deth for miſericorde/ And foryaf vs our origi nal ſymys/ And therby releidy fro the peyne of helle and amenuſidy the peyne of purgatorye/ The ſpicis of miſericorde ley as for to lene and eke for to yeue / and forto forgeue and for to releue / and for to haue pyte in herte and com= paſſion of myſchyef of thyn euen criſten/ And eke chaſtyce there as nede is / Another remedye ayenſt auarice is reſo= nable larges/ But ſothly here behoueth the conſideracion of our lordy Jheſu Criſt and of his grace and of his tempo= rel goodis and eke of the goodis perdurable that Criſt yaf vs/ and eke to haue remembrance of the deth that he ſhal dye and receyue/ and he woot not whan / And eke that he ſhal forgoon alle that he hath diſpendid and goten in goodis / But for as muche as ſom̃e folk be vnmeſurable. men oughten eſchewe fool largeſſe that men clepen waſt. Certes he that is foollarge he yeuyth not his catel but he leſith his catel/ Certes what thinge that he yeuyth for veyn glorye as to mynſtrals and to folk that bere his renome in the worldy he hath do ſyme and none almes/ Certes he leſith folwe his goody and ſekith no thyngy but ſyme / he is lyke to an hors that ſeketh rather to drynke droppy wa= ter and troubly/ than water of the cleer welle/ To hem ap perteyney the maliſon that Criſt ſhal yeue atte day of dome to hem that ſhulle be dampnedy ¶

¶ Sequitur de Gula .

After auarice comyth glotonye/ whiche is expreſſe ayenſt the comandement of gody ¶ Glotonye is

vnmesurable appetyte to ete or to drynke/or els to ete vn/
mesurably and out of tyme more than nedeth is glotonye
This syme corrupti al this World as is wel shewid
in the syme of Adam and Eue/ Lo eke What saith seint
Paule of glotonye/ Meny men saith he of Whiche I haue
ofte said you/ and now I saye hit wepyng that they be
enemyes of the crosse of Crist/ of Whiche the ende is deth
and of Whyche her Wombe is her god/ And her glorye
in confusyon of hem that so seruyn erthely thyngys/ He
that is vsaunt to thys syme of glotonye/ He may no
syme Wythstande/ He mote be in seruage of alle vices
for it is the deuyllis horde there he hydeth hym in and rest
eyth/ ¶ This syme hath many spyces/ The first is
dronkenes/ that is the horrible sepulture of mannes re/
son/ And therfore When that a man is dronke/he hath
lost his reson and thys is dedely syme/ But certes
When a man is not Wont to straunge drynkis/and per
auenture knoweth not the strengthe of the drynke or hath
feblenes in his hede or hath trauayled thurgh Whiche he
drynketh the more/al be he sodeynly caught With drynke
it is no dedely syme but venyal. The second spyce of
glotonye is/ that the spyryte of a man Wexith al trouble
For dronkenes bereueth hym discrecyon of his Wytt/
The thirde spice of glotonye is When a man deuoureth
his mete and hath no rightful maner of etyng. The
fourthe is When thurgh the grete habundaūce of his mete
the humours of his body ben distemperyd/ The fifthe
is forgetfulnes by to muche drynkyng/ For Whyche a
man forgetyth by the morowe What he dyde ouer eue

In another maner hey distynete the spyces of glotonye after seynt Gregore/ The first is for to ete byfore tyme / The Seconde is Whan a man getith hym to deliciate mete / The thirde is Whan men taken to mykil ouer mesure / The .iiij. is curyosite With grete entente to maken and apparaylle his mete / The fyfthe is for to ete gredily / These hey the fyue fyngers of the deuyll is honde by Whiche he draweth folk to synne / Ayenst glotonye is the remedye Abstynence of his body as saith Galyene/ but that holde I not meritorye yf he do it only for hele of his body / Seynt Austyn Wole that abstynence be do by vertu and With pacience / Abstinence he saith is litil Worth/ but yf he haue goody Wille/ and but he be enforcyd by pacyence and by charyte / and that men do it for godis sake / and in hope to haue the blisse in heuene / The felaWs of abstinence hey attemperance that holdeth the mene in alle thingis eke shame that escheweth al dishoneste suffisance that seketh no riche metis ne drynkis ne doth no force of none outrageous apareyllyng of mete Also that restreyneth by reson the delauye appetyte of etyng and drynkyng / Sobrenes also that restreyneth the out rage of drynke / Sparyng also that restreyneth the delicat ease to sitte longe at his mete / Wherfore some folk stonden of her owen Wille Whan they ete be cause they Wil ete at lasse leyser . /

¶ Sequitur de Luxuria .

After glotonye thenne comyth lecherye/ For thyse tWo synnys hey so nyghe cosyns that ofte tyme they Wyl not departe / Gody Woot this synne is ful displaysaunt to gody / For he sayde hym self do no lecherye / And therfore

he putteth grete peynes ayenst this synne For in tholde lawe yf a woman thral were taken in this synne she sholde be beten with staues to the deth / And yf she were a gentyl woman she sholde be slayn with stonys / And yf she were a bisshops doughter she sholde be brent by goddis cõmande-ment / Furthermore for the synne of lecherye god dreynt al the world / And after that he brent fyue cytees and sanke downe in to helle . Now lete vs speke therme of the synne of lecherye that men clepen auoultrye that is of wedded folke that is to saye yf that one of hem be wedded or els bothe. Seynt John saith that thauowtrers shul be in helle in a stynkyng bremyng pyt of fyre & brymston. For lecherye is likened to brymston for the stynke of her ordure. Certes the bereuyng & breking of this sacramẽt is an horrible thinge Hit was made of god hym self in paradyse & confermed by Jhesu Crist / As saith seynt Mathew in the gospel / A man shal lete fader & moder & take hym to his wyf / and they shal be two in one flesh / This sacrament betokeneth the knyttyng to gyder of Crist & of holy chirche / And not only that god forbad auowtry in dede / but eke he comanded that ÿ sholdest not coueyte thy neyghbours wyf / In this heest saith saint Austyn / Al maner couetyse to do lecherye is forboden / Lo What saith seynt Mathew in the gospel Who so seeth a womã to couetyse of his lust / He hath don lecherye with her in his herte / Here may ye see that not only the dede of this synne is forbode / but eke the desyre to do that synne / This cursed synne anoyeth greuously hem that it haunte and first to the soule. For he obligeth it to synne and to peyne of deth that is perdurable / and to the body anoyeth it greuously

For it dyeth hym/ and of his blood he maketh sacrifyce to the fende of helle / hit Wasteth his catel & his substance And certes yf it be a foule thing a man to Waste his catel on Women/ yet is hit a fouler thing that Whan for suche ordure Women spenden upon men her catel and substance This syme as saith the prophete byreuyth a man and a Woman her goody fame and al her honour / and it is ful playsant to the deuyl / For therby Wymeth he the most party of this Worldy / And right as a marchant deliteth hym most in chaffare that he hath most auauntage of / right so deliteth the fende in this ordure / This is that other hondy of the deuyl With fyue fyngers to cacche the peple to this vilony / The first fynger is the foule lokyng of the fool Wo/ man that sleeth right as the basiliook sleeth folk by the ve/ nym of his sight / For couetyse of the eyen folowyeth the co/ uetyse of the herte / The secondy fynger is the vilayns tou/ chyng in Wickidy maner / And therfore saith Salamon That Who so touchith and handelith a Woman / he farith lyke hym that handelyth the scorpion that stingyth and sodeinly sleeth thurgh his enuemynyng or as Who so tou/ chyth pyche he shendeth his fyngris / The thirde is foule Wordes that farith lyke fyre that brennyth that right anon brennyth the herte / The fourthe is kyssing And trewly he Were a grete fole that Woldy kysse the mouth of a bren/ nyng ouyn or of a furneys / And more foolis hey they that kyssen in vilony / For that mouth is the mouth of helle / And namely thyse olde dotardis holours yet Wil they kysse though they may not do and smater hem / Certes they be lyke to houndis / For an houndy Whan he cometh by

the Poser/or by other benchis yf he may not pysse yet Wil he
heue vp his legge and make countenaunce to pysse/And
for that may Wenyth that he may not syme for lichorousnes
that he doth With his Wyf / Certes that oppynyon is fals
God Woot a man may sle hym silf With his owen knyff
and make hym dronke With his owen tome/Certes be it
Wyf or chylde or Worldly thingis that he louith before god.
it is his mawmet/and he is an ydolastre/May shold loue
his Wyf by discrecion pacientlY and attemperatly / And
than is she as though she Were his suster/The fyfte synger
of the deuyllis hond is the stynkyngh dede of lecherye / He
grypeth hym by the reynes for to throwe hym in to the fur-
neys of helle/there as they shal haue the fyre and the Wor-
mys that euer shal lasten / Wepyngh and Waylingh / sharp
hunger and thirst Grisslynes of deuillis that shulle al to
trede hym Withoute respite and Withouten ende/Of lecherye
as I sayde sourden diuerse spyces as formicacion that is be-
tWix man and Woman that ben not maryed and this is
dedely syme and ayenst nature/And destruction to nature
is ayenst nature/Perfay the reson telleth hym eke that it is
dedely syme for as muche as god forbad lecherye/And seynt
Poule yeuyth hym the regne that is due to no Wight/but to
hem that do no dedely syme/Another syme of lecherye is to
bereuen a mayde of her maydenhede/ For certes he that so doth
he cachyth a mayde out of the hyest degre that is in thys
present lyf/ And bereueth her that precyous fruyt that the
book clepeth the hundredy fruyt/I can say it none other Wyse
in englisshe/but in latyn it hight centesimus fructus/Certes
he that so doth is cause of many dōmages and Vilonyes mo

than ony may can rekene / right as he somtyme is cause of alle damages that bestis doo in the felde that breketh the hegge of the closure / thurgh Whiche he destroieth that may not be restored / For certis nomore may maydenhede be restored / than an arme that is smyten fro the body may retorne ayen to Weye / She may haue mercy this Woot I Well / yf she do penytence / but neuer shal it be / but that she is corupt / and al be it soo that I haue spoke somWhat of auoultrye / it is good to shelde mo perylls that longen to aduoultry for teschue the foule symys of aduoultrye / In latyn it is for to saye thapprochyng of another mannys bed / thurgh Whiche they that Were one flesh habounden her bodyes to other per / sones / Of thys synne as sayth the Wyseman come many harmys First brekyng of feith And certis feith is keye of Cristendome / And Whan that keye is broken and lorn Certeyn cristendom standith Without fruyt / This synne is eke theefte for theefte generally to speke of / is for to reue a thyng of a man ayenst his Will / Certis this is the foulest theefte that may be / Whan a Woman stelith her body from her husbond and yeueth it to her holour to defoule it / and stelyth her soule from Crist and yeuyth hit to the deuyll. This is a foule theefte for to stele and breke the Chalys. For thyse aduoultreris breken the temple of god spirytuelly and stelyn the Vessel of grace / that is the body and the soWle / For Whiche Crist shal destroye hem as saith seynt Paule / Sothly of thys theefte doubtyd gretly Joseph. Whan that his lordis Wyf praid hym of Vilonye Whan he said / Lo my lady / hoW my lord hath take to me Vnder my Ward al that he hath in this World / ne nothing is out of

my polber but onky ye that be his Wyf / andy hou sholdy J
theme do this Wickidnes andy syme so horrible ayenst gody
Alas al to litil is suche trouth nolb y founde / The thirde
harm is / the fylthe thurgh Whiche they breke the comand=
ement of gody andy defolble the albter of her matrymonye
that is Crist. For certis in so mykyl as the sacrament of
mariage is so noble andy so digne so muche it is the gretter
syme to breke it. For gody made mariage in paradyse in
the state of Jmocencye to multiplye mankynde to the ser=
uyse of gody / Andy therfore is the brekyngy therof greuous
Of Whiche brekyngy comyn fals heyres / ofte tyme that
Wrongfully occupien folkis heritagis / Andy therfore Wil
Crist put hem out of the Regne of heuen that is herytage
to goody folk / Of this brekyngy comyth eke that folk vn
Waar Wedde / or syme With her olben kynrede / And namely
the harlottis that haunten bordellis / Thise fool Womeny molbe
be likenydy to a comyn gonge Where as meny purge her ordure
What saye We eke of putyers that lyuen by the horryble
syme of putrye / andy constreyne Womeny ye some her olbeny
Wyuys or his childe as dy thyse halbdis to yelde hem a cer=
teyn rente of her bodily putrye / Certis thyse ben cursidy
synnys / Vnderstonde ye eke that aduoultrye is set comynly
in the ten comandementis bitWene theffte andy manslaghter
For it is the gretteste theffte that may be. For it is theffte
of body andy of solble / Andy it is lyke to homicyde / For
it kerupth a two hem that first Were made one flesshy /.
And by the olde lawe they sholdy be slayn / but natheles
by the lawe of Jhesu Crist that is the lawe of pyte / Whan
he saydy to the Woman that Was founde in auoutrye /.

and ſholdy haue be ſlayn With ſtones after the Wil of the
Jelbis as Was her lalbe / Goo quod Jheſu Criſt and haue
nomore Will to do ſynne / Sothly Vengeance of auoultrye
is albardedy to the peyn of helle / but it be diſtourbydy With
penaunce / Yet bey ther mo ſpyces of this arſidy ſynne as
Whan that one of hem is religyous or ellis bothe / or of folk
that bey entrydy in to ordre as Subdeken / or deken / preſt / or
hoſpitalers / and euer the hyer that he is in order / the gretter
is the ſynne / For they haue made grete Vowes to kepe Chaſ
tite / This ſynne of brekyngy of his auowe of chaſtite is
Whan he receyuedy order / And ſoth it is that holy order is
chief of alle the treſour of gody and is a ſpecial ſigne and
mark of chaſtite Whiche that is the moſt precyous lyf that
is / And eke this ordridy folk bey ſpecially titledy to gody
for Whiche Whan they do dedely ſynne / they bey the ſpecyal
traytours of gody and of his peple / For they lyue by the
peple to praye for the peple / And Whyles they be ſuche tray-
tours her prayers auayle not to the peple / Preſtis bey as
aungellis as by the myſtery of her dignyte / But forſothe
ſaynt Paule ſaith that Sathanas transformeth hym in
ay aungel of light / Sothly the preeſt that hauntith ſynne
He may be likenedy to ay aungel of derknes transformedy
in to ay aungel of light / He ſemeth ay aungel of light /
but forſothe he is ay aungel of derknes / Suche preſtis bey
the ſonys of hely as is ſhewedy in the book of kynges that
they Were the ſonys of Belyal / that is the deuyll / Belial
is to ſaye Withouten Juge / And ſo farey they / hem thyn-
keth that they be fre and haue no Juge nomore thay hath
a free bole that taketh Whiche kowe that hym liketh in the

towy / so fareth they be Women / For right as a fre bole is
ynowh for al a towy / right so is a corupt preest ynowh for
al a paryssh or a contre / Thyse preestis as saith the book
knowbe not the mymistery of preesthode to the peple ne to godz
ne they holde hem not a paidz as saith the book of sode flesh
that was to hem offrydz / But they take by force the flesh
that is ralbe / Certis right so thyse shrewbis holde hem not
a paydz of rostidz flesh andz sodeth with whyche the peppl
fedeth hem in grete reuerence / but they wiff haue ralbe flesh
as folkis wyuys andz her doughters / Andz certis thyse
Women that consentyn to her harlottis do grete wronge to
Crist & to holy chirche / to alle halowbis andz to alle soulis / for
they bereuyn hem al that sholdz worshipp Crist & holy chirche +
andz also to prayen for al cristen soulis / Andz therfore haue
suche preestis & her lemans that consentyn to her lechery the
malison of the cristen court til they come to amendement / The
thirde spyce of auoultrye is somtyme betwix a man & his
wyf / Andz that is whan they take no regarde in their assem
blingz but only for flesshly delyte / as saith seynt Jherome
andz recke of nothingz but they be assembliz by cause they be
mariedz / Al is goodz y nowh as thinketh to hem / But in
suche folk hath the deuil power. as saide the aungel Raphael
to Tobye / For in her assemblingz they put Jhesu Crist out
of her herte / andz yeue hem self to alle ordure / The fourth
spyce is of hem that assemblyn by her kynrede or of hem that
ben of one affinyte / or els with hem with whom her faders
hadz delidz with the synne of lecherye / This synne maketh
hem like houndis that taken none hede of kynrede / Andz
certes parentela is in two maners / or gostly or flesshly +

goſtly is ſoz to delyn With hꝛ goſſibs / Foꝛ right ſo as a godfader is hꝛ fader ſpirytuel / Foꝛ Whiche a Womay may im no leſſe ſynne ſemble With hꝛ goſſib thay With hꝛ owen bꝛother. ¶ The fyfthe ſynne is that abhomynable ſynne of Whiche noman ought to ſpeke of / ne Wꝛyte / natheles it is openly reherſed in holy Wꝛyt / Certes holy Wꝛyt may not be defouled moze than the ſonne that ſhyneth on a donghill Another ſynne appertayneth to lecherye that comyth in ſlepyng / and this ſynne cometh ofte to hem that hey may / dens and eke to hem that hey oꝛupt And this ſynne is cleped pollucion / that cometh in foure maners Somtyme it cometh of languyſſhyng of the body of man / Somtyme it cometh of Infirmyte foꝛ the feblenes of the vertu reten / tyf as phyſik maketh mencyon / Somtyme of ſurfete of mete and dꝛynke / and ſomtyme foꝛ violente thoughtis that hey encloſed in mannys mynde Whan he goth to ſlepe. Whiche may not be With oute ſynne / Foꝛ Whiche men muſte kepe hem Wiſely / oꝛ els may they ſynne gꝛeuouſly. Now cometh remedye ayenſt lecherye / and that is generally chaſtite and contynence that refreyneth alle diſoꝛdinat meuyngis that comyn of fleſhly talentis / And euer the gretter merite ſhal he haue that refreyneth moſt the Wicked chauffyng oꝛ oꝛdure of this ſynne. And this is in two maners / that is to ſaye chaſtite of mariage and chaſtite of Wedowhede. Now ſhalt thou Vnderſtande that Matrymony is leeffful aſſemblyng of man and Woman that receyuen the vertue of the ſacrement / the bonde Whiche that may not be departed in al her lyf / this is to ſaye Whylis they lyue bothe. This is as ſayth the book a ful gꝛete ſacrement. God made it

as J haue ſaidy in paradyſe andy Wolde hym ſelf be bozn in
mariage/andy fozto halowe mariage he Was atte Weddingy
Where he tozneday Water in to Wyn̄/Whiche Was the firſt mi-
racle that he Wrought in erthe to foze his diſcyples/ The
treWe effect of mariage clenſith foznicacion andy replenyſ-
ſhith holy chirche of goody lynage. Foz as the ende of ma
riage chaungith dedly ſynne in to venyal betWene hem that
ben Weddidy andy makith the hertis al one as Wel of hem
as the bodyes/ Thus is he rey mariage that is ſtabliſſhidy
by gody oz that ſynne began Whan naturel lalWe Was in his
right poynt in paradys/And it Was ordynedy that a Wo-
man ſholdy haue but one man As ſaith ſaint Auſtyn by
many reſons/ Firſt that mariage is figuredy betWene Criſt
andy holy chirche/Andy another is that a man is hedy of
the Womany algate by ordynaunce it ſholdy be ſo/ Foz yf a
Womany hady mo meny than one/theme ſhol'dy ſhe haue moo
hedis than one / andy that Were an horrible thyngy before
gody/Andy eke a Womany myght not plefe many folk at-
tones/Andy alſo ther ſholdy neuer be pees ne reſte amongs
them foz euerich Woldy aſke his owen thynge/Andy fur-
thermoze noman ſholdy knoWe his owen engendrure ne Who
ſholdy haue his heritage/andy the Womany ſholdy be laſſe lo-
uidy fro the tyme that ſhe Were commyxt With many/Now
comyth how a man ſholdy here hym With his Wyf e namely
in two thingis that is to ſaye in ſuffraunce e in reuerence.
Andy this ſhewde firſt criſt Whan he made firſt Womany Foz
he made her not of adams hedy Foz ſhe ſholdy not haue to
grete lozdſhip Foz there as the Womany hath ỹ maiſtrye ſhe
makith to muche diſaraye/ther nede none enſamplis of this

Thexperience that We haue day by day ought to ſuffyſe/Alſo
certes ne he made not the Woman of the feet of Adam / for
ſhe ſholde not beholde to lowe/for ſhe can not paciently ſuf
fre/But gody made Woman of the Ryb of Adam/ For Wo
man ſholdy be felawe vnto man / May ſholdy bere hym to
his Wyf + in fayth + in trouthe andy in loue as ſeyth ſaynt
Poule/and that man ſholdy leue his Wyf as Criſt dyde holy
chirche that loudy it ſo Wel that he deyde for hit/So ſholdy
a man for his Wyf yf it Were nede / Nowe holde that a Wom
man ſholdy be ſubget to her huſbondy that tellyth ſeynt
Peter andy eke as ſaith the decree / a Woman as longe as
ſhe is a Wyf / ſhe hath none auctoryte to ſWere ne to bere
Wytnes Wyth outen leue of her huſbondy / Andy alſo ſhe
ſholdy be honeſt andy attemprat of aray/ I Wote Wel that
they ſholdy ſette her entente to pleſe her huſbondes / but not
by queyntyſe of her aray / ſaint Jherome ſaith that Wyuys
ben apparayllyd in ſilk andy in purpure maye not clothen
hem in Jheſu Criſt / ſeynt Gregoze ſaith eke that no Wight
ſeketh no precyous araye/but only Vayn glozye to be honou
rdy the moze befezn the peple/hit is a grete folye a Woman
to haue grete aray outWardy andy her ſelf to be ful InWardy
A Wyf ſholdy eke be meſurable + in lokyng + in beryng andy
in lawhyng audy diſcrete in alle her Wozdes andy her dedes
Andy aboue alle Worldly thingis ſhe ſholdy loue her huſ /
bonde With alle her herte andy to hym be trewe of her body
So ſholde euery huſbonde eke be trewe to his Wyf/for ſithyn
al the body is the huſbondis ſo ſholde her herte be alſo/or ellis
ther is betWix hem tWo no parfyt mariage as in that/ Than
ſhal a man vnderſtande that for thre thingis a man andy

his Wyf mowe assemble / The first for thentent of gen=
dure of childzen to the seruise of godz ¶ For certis that
is the cause fynal of matrymony / That other is to yelde
euerych of hem the dette of her body / For neyther of hem
hath power of his owen body / The thirde is for tescheWe
lecherye andz vilonye / ¶ The fourth forsothe is dedely
synne / As to the first it is meritorye / The seconde also
for the decree saith she hath meryte for that she yeldith to
her husbondz the dette of her body / Ye though it be ayenst
her likyngh andz the luste of her herte / The thirde maner
Which is teschewe lecherye / I holde it no dedely synne +
but many of thyse be not Without kenyal synne for the
ozupcyon andz delyte therof / The fourth maner is to
Vnderstande yf that they assemble only for amerouse loue
andz for none of the forsaydz causis but for tacomplisshe
the bzemynghz delyte they recke neuer howe ofte / sothly it
is a dedely synne / andz yet Wyth sozowe some folk Wyl
payne hem moze to do thanz her appetyte suffyseth / The se
conde maner of chastyte is to be clene Wydowe to eschewe
the bzasynge of mangz to desyre thembzasyngis of Jhesu
Crist / Thyse ben tho that haue ben Wyuys andz haue for=
goon her husbondis / Andz eke Women that haue don le
cherye / andz be releuydz by penaunce / Andz certis yf that
a Wyf can kepe her al chaste by licence of her husbonde / so
that she gaf no cause ner none occasion that he agiltydz
Hit Were to here grete meryte / These maner of Women
that obseruen chastite muste be clene in herte as Wel as in
body ⁊ in thought ⁊ mesurable in clothingh ⁊ in contenaūce
Abstynent in etyngh ⁊ drinkyngh / in spekyngh / ⁊ in dede

Andy themme is ſhe veſſel of the bowe of the bliſſydy Mayd;
deleyn that fulfilledy holy chirche ful of goody odour + / The
thirde maner of chaſtyte is Virgynite / andy hit behouyth that
ſhe be holy in herte andy clene of body / themme is ſhe the ſpouſe
to Jheſu Criſt / andy ſhe is the lyf of aungellis / ſhe is the
preyſingy of this Worldy andy ſhe is as thyſe martirs in
Pegalye / She hath in her that tonge may not telle / Virgi;
nyte bare our lordy Jheſu Criſt / andy Virgynite Was hym ſelf
Another remedye ayenſt lecherye is ſpecially to Withdrawe
ſuche thyngis as yeuyn occaſion to that Vilony as etyngy
andy drynkyng + For certes Whan the pot boyleth ſtrongly
The beſte remedy is to Withdrawe the fyre / Slepyngy longe
in grete quyete is eke a grete norice to lecherye / Another
remedye agaynſt lecherye is that a Woman or a man eſchewe
companye of hem by Whiche he demyth to be temptidy for al
be it ſo that the dede be Withſtande yet is ther grete tempta;
cion / Sothly a Whyte Wal al though it breme not fully
by the ſtynkyngy of a candel / yet is the Wal black of the
light / In lyke Wyſe ofte tymes ſuche perſones haue euyl na
me be cauſe they dwelle in Vicyous company / Wel ofte tyme
haue I redy that noman truſte in his owen perfection / but
he be ſtrenger than Sampſon / holyer than Dauid / Wiſer
than Salamon / Now after as I haue declaredy you as I
can of the + Vij + dedly ſymys andy ſome of her braunches
andy her remedyes / Sothly yf I coude I Wolde telle you the
ten comandements / but ſo highe a doctryne I lete to diuines
But natheles I truſt to gody they be touchidy in this tre;
tyſe euerich of hem alle +

Adhuc secunda pars penitencie.

Now as to the secondy part of penytence hit stont in confession of mouth as I began in the secondy chapitre to fore/Saint Austyn saith synne is in euery Wordy and in euery dede/and al that men coueyten ayenst the lawe of Jhesu Crist/And this is for to synne in herte in mouth and in dede by thy fyue Wyttis/that ben sighte heerynge/smellynge/tastynge or sauorynge/and felynge/Now is hit goody to vnderstande the circumstancis that agruggen mikyl euery synne/Thou shalt considere What thou art that dost the synne/Whethir thou be male or female/yongh or oldy Gentil or thral/fre or seruaunt/Wyse or fool/hool or syke/ Weddidy or syngle/ordrydy or vnordredy/clerk or seculer/ Yf she be of thy kynrede bodily or gostly or none/a maydey or none/in maner of homicyde or none/horryble grete synne or smal/and how longe thou hast contynuedy in synne The thirde Circumstaunce is the place Where thou hast doy synne/Whether in other mens housis or in thyn owen/in felde or in chirche or in chircheyerdy/In chirche dedicate or non. For yf the chirche Were halowedy and man or Woman spylle his kynde Withyn that place by Wey of synne or by Wickedy temptacion the chirche Were enterditedy til it Were reconcyledy by the bisshop/And the preest sholdy be enterdi/ tedy that dyde suche a vilonye/terme of his lyf & he sholdy nomore synge masse/andy yf he dide he sholdy do dedely synne at euery tyme that he songe masse/The iiij. circumstance is by suche mediatours as by messangers or for entisement/ or for consentement to here compony With felawship. For many one for to here felawship Wil goo to the deuil of helle.

For they that eggyn or consenten to the synne ben parte-
ners to the synne and of the dampnacion of the symar.
The sythe is how many tymes that he hath synned and
it be in his mynde/and how ofte he hath falle/ For he that
ofte fallyth in synne he dispyseth the mercy of god and
maecyth his synne / And is vnkynde to god / And he
weyth the more feble to wistonde synne / and synneth the
more lightly/and the latter arysith/and the more eschueth
forto shryue hym/and namely to hym that hath ben his
confessour. For whiche that folk whan they falle ayen in
her olde folyes they forletyn her olde confessours al vtterly
Or ellis they departen her shryfte in diuerse places / But
sothly suche departyd shryfte deseruyth no mercy of god
for his synnys/The sixthe circumstaunce is this why that
a man synneth / as by what temptacion / and of hym self
procure thilke temptacion/ or by excytyng of other folk/or
yf thou synne with a woman by force/or by her owen assent
Or yf the woman magre her hedy haue be enforced or not.
and whether for couetyse or pouerte/Alle this shalt thou
telle / And yf it was her procuryng or no and alle suche
maner thingis/ The seuenth circumstaunce is in what ma
ner he hath don his synne/or how that she hath suffrid how
folk haue don to her / and of the same shal the man telle
alle the circumstancis/And yf that he haue synned with
comyn bordel women or none / in fastyng tymes or none.
or don his synne in holy tymes or none/or before his shrifte
Or after his latter shrifte / and hath pauenture therfore
broken his penaunce enioyned / by whos help and whos
counceyll/by sorcery or craft/al muste be told thyse thingis

after that they be grete or ſmale and grugge the conſcience of man or woman/And eke the preeſt that is the Juge may the better be auyſed of his Jugement/in yeuyng of his penance/and that ſhal be after his contricion. For vnder ſtonde wel that after tyme that a man hath defoulyd his baptesme by ſynne/yf he wil come to ſauacion/ther is none other weye but penaunce and ſhrifte & ſatiſfaction/and namely by the two/yf ther be a confeſſour to whom he may ſhryue hym/And that he firſt be very contryte and repentaunt/And the thirde yf he haue lif to perfourme it/The me ſhal man loke and conſidere yf he wil make a trewe and a prouffytable confeſſion/ther muſte be foure condicions. Firſt hit muſte be in ſorouful bitternes of herte as ſayde the kynge Ezechye to god/I wil remembre alle the yeris of my lyf in the bitternes of my herte/This condicion of bitternes hath. v. ſignes/The firſt is that confeſſion muſte be ſhamefaſt not for to couereyn ne to hyde his ſynne/But for he hath agiltid his god & defouled his ſoule/and herof ſaith ſaint Auſtyn/The herte trauaylleth for ſhame of his ſynne/and for he hath grete ſhamefaſtnes/he is digne to haue grete mercy/Whiche was the confeſſion of the publi-cane that wolde not lyfte vp his eyen to heuen/for he hadd offendid god of heuen. For whiche ſhamefaſtnes he hadd anon the mercy of god/And therfore ſaith ſaint Auſtyn That ſuche ſhamefaſt folk ben nept forȝeuenes and remiſſion/That other ſynne is humylite of confeſſion of whiche ſaith ſaynt Peter/Humbleth you vnder the mighty honde of god in confeſſion. For therby god forȝeuyth the ſynnys for he allone hath power/This humylite ſhal be in herte

andy in ſigne outwardy / For right as he hath humylyte to
gody in his herte / Right ſo ſholdy he humble his body out
wardy to the preeſt that ſitteth in goddis place / For whiche
in no maner / ſithnys that Criſt is ſoueray̅n andy the preeſt
mene andy mediatour bitwene cryſt andy the ſynnar And
the ſynnar is leſſe by wey of reſon / Than ſholdy not the
ſynnar ſytte as hygh̄e as his confeſſour / but knele byfory
hym or at his feet but yf maladye deſtourbe it / For he ſhal
not take kepe who ſyt there but in whos place he ſitteth Anā
that hath treſpacedy to a lordy andy ow̄myth for to axe mercy
andy make his accorde andy ſette hym doun anon by the lorde
Men wolde holde hym outrageous andy not worthy ſo ſone
for to haue remyſſyon ne mercy / The thirde ſigne is that
thy chryſte ſholde be ful of teris yf may may wepe / Andy
yf a may may not wepe wyth his bodily eyen / lete hym
wepe in his herte. Suche was the confeſſion of ſaint Petir
For after he hady forſake Jheſu Criſt he wente out & wept
ful bitterly / The fourth ſigne is that he lete not for ſhame
to ſhryue hym andy ſhewe his confeſſion / Suche was the
confeſſion of Maudeleyn / that ſparith for no ſhame of hem
that were at the feſte / for to go to our lordy Jheſu Criſt andy
beknowe to hym her ſynne. The fyfthe ſigne is / that may
andy woman be obeyſſaunt to reſceyue the penaunce that is
enioyned̄y hem / For certes Jheſu Criſt for the gylt of one
may was obedyent to the deth / The ſecondy condicion of
very confeſſion is that hit be haſtely doy̅n / For certes yf
a may hady a dedly wounde / euer the lenger that he tarryedy
to warriſſhe hym / the more wolde it corupte andy haſte hym
to his deth / Andy eke the wounde be the worſe for to hele.

Right so fareth ſyme that longe tyme is in a mā vnſhewd
Certis a may ought haſtely to ſhewe his ſyme for many
cauſis/and for drede of deth that cometh ofte tyme ſo ſodenly
& is in no certeyn What tyme it ſhal be ne in What place And
eke the lenger he tarieth the ferther is he fro Criſt And yf
he abyde vnto his laſt day/ſcarſely may he ſhriue or amende
hym for his ſymys or repente hym for the greuous maladye
of his deth/And for as muche as he hath not in his lif her
kenyd Jheſu criſt What he hath ſpoken vnto him/he ſhal crye
vnto our lord at his laſt day & ſkarcely he ſhal herken hym
Vnderſtonde that this condicion muſte haue foure thinges.
Firſt that thy ſhrifte be purueid afore and auiſed/And
that a may can ſhriue hym of his ſynnys be it of pryde or of
enuye & ſo forth With the ſpicis & circumſtancis/And that
he haue comprehendid in his mynde the nombre & the gre-
nes of his ſynnys/and how long he hath leyen in ſyme/and
eke that he be contrite of his ſymys/and be in ſtedefaſt pur-
pos by the grace of god neuer efte to falle ayen in ſyme to
Whiche he is inclined/alſo thou ſhalt ſhriue the of alle thy
ſymys to one mā/and not parcelmele to one may & parcel-
mele to another/That is it to be vnderſtande in thentent to
pfey thy confeſſion as for ſhame or drede for it nys but ſtran
glyng in thy ſoule/For certes Jheſu criſt is alle good/in hym
is none imperfection/And therfore he forfeuith al pfightly.
& els neuer a deel/I ſaye not yf ỹ be aſſigned to the penetan
cer for certain ſyme that thou art bounde to ſhewe him alle the
remenaunt of thy ſymys of Which ỹ haſt be ſhriuen of thy
curate but yf it like ỹ of thin humilite/this is no depting of
ſhrifte/ne I ſay not there as I ſpeke of diuiſion of cōfeſſion

That yf thou haue licence to shryue the to a discrete and
ay honest preest / and Where the liketh / and by the licence
of thy curate / that thou ne maist Wel shryue the of alle thy
symmys / but leet no blot behynde / lete no synne be vntold
as fer as thou hast remembraunce / And Whan thou shalt
be shryuen of thy curate / telle hym eke alle the symmys that
thou hast don syth thou Were last shryuen / Also the fery
shryfte aslith certeyn condicions / First that thou shryue
the by thy fre Wil / not constreyned ne for shame of folk.
ne for maladye or suche thingis / for it is reson that he that
trespaceth by his fre Wille confesse his trespaas / ne none
other may shal telle his synne / ne Wrathe hym ayenst the
preest for his amonesshyng to lete his synne. The secondy
condicion is that thy shryfte be lawful / that is to saye / thou
that shryuest the / and eke the preest that herith thy confes-
sion been verily in the feith of holy chirche / and that a may
be not dispayred of the mercy of Jhesu Crist as Cayn and
Judas Were / And eke a may muste accuse hym self of his
owen trespaas / and not another / but he shal blame and
Wyte hym self of his owen malice and of his synne and
non other / But natheles yf another may be encheson of en-
tysyng of his symmys / or yf the estate of a persone be suche
by Whiche his synne is agreggid or els that he may not
pleinly shryue but he telle the persone Whiche he hath symmyd
With / thenne may he telle / so that his entente be not to bac-
byte the persone / but only to declare his confession / Thou
shalt eke make no lesynge in thy confession for humylyte
Perauenture to saye that thou hast do symmys of Whiche thou
Were neuer gilty / For seynt Austyn saith / yf thou by cause

of humylite makiſt a leſyngh of thy ſelf though thou were not in ſynne a foze/yet art thou in ſynne theme thurgh thy leſynge / Thou ſhalt eke ſhewe thy ſynne by thy propre mouth but thou be domb / andy not by letter / foz thou that haſt do ſynne/thou ſhalt haue the ſhame of thy confeſſion. Thou ſhalt not eke peynte thy confeſſion by faire & ſubtil wordes to couere the moze thy ſynne For theme begyleſt thou thy ſelf/andy not the preeſt/thou muſte telle it pleinly be it neuer ſo horrible ne ſo foulle/Thou ſhalt eke ſhriue the to a preeſt that is diſcrete to counceyl the/Andy eke thou ſhalt not ſhriue the foz veyn glozye ne foz ypocreſye/ne foz no cauſe but only foz the doubte of Jheſu Criſt andy the hele of thy ſoule / Thou ſhalt not eke reme to the preeſt al ſodenly to telle hym lightly thy ſynne as who tellith a iape or a tale. but auiſedly with grete deuocion andy general to ſhriue the ofter than onys of ſynne whiche thou haſt be ſhriuen of / it is the moze merite/ Foz as ſaith ſaint Auſtyn/thou ſhalt haue the moze lightly relece & grace of gody / bothe of ſynne andy of payne/Andy certis onys a yere at the leſt weye/it is lawful foz to be houſelid. Foz ſothly ones a yere alle thynges renouelyn.

¶ Incipit tercia pars penitencie.

Now haue I tolde of tery confeſſion that is the ſecondy part of penitencie/The thirde part is ſatiſfaction/& ſtondeth generally in almes dede & in bodely payne/Now bey ther thre maner of almeſſe Contricion of herte where a mā offrith hym ſelf to godi/Another is to haue pyte of defaute of his neyghbours/The thirde is in yeuyngh of goody counceyl andy comfort bodely andy goſtly where mey haue nede

and namely in substaunce of mannys food / And take kepe that a man hath nede of these thingis generally / he hath nede of food of clothing and herbewoth / he hath nede of charitable counceyllyng and visityng in pryson / and ma ladye and sepulture of dede bodyes / And yf thou maist not visite the nedeful with thy persone / visite hym with thy message & thy yeftis / These ben the general almesses of Werkis of charite of hem that haue temporel richesse or discrecion in counceyllyng / Of these Werkis shalt thou here at the day of dome this almesse sholdest thou do of thy proper thingis and hastely and priuely yf thou maist / But na theles yf thou maist not do it priuely thou shalt not forbere to do almes though men see hit / so that it be not do for thank of the World / but only for to haue thanke of our lord Jhesu Crist / For as witnessith saynt Mathew / A Cyte may not be hyd that is set vpon a mountayn / ne men light not a lantern and put hit vnder a bussbel / but setten it vpon a Candelstik to lighten the men in the hous / Right so shal your light / lighten before men that they mowe see your good Werkis and glorifye your fader that is in heuen / Now as for to speke of bodily peyne / it stont in prayers / in Wakyng In fastyng and in vertuouse techyng of orisons / ye shal vnderstande that orisons or prayers is for to saye / A pietof loys of herte that is redressid in god and expressing it by worde outward to remeue harmeful thyngis / and to haue thingis spirytuel and durable and somtyme temporel thingis / Of Whiche orisons / in the orison of pater noster hath Jhesu Crist enclosid moste thingis / Certis it is pry / uylegid of thre thingis in his dignyte / for Whiche it is

more digne than ony other prayer for that Jhesu Crist hym
self made it/and it is short/for it sholde be owde the more
slightly/and forto withholde more esely in herte/and helpe
hym self the ofter with thorison / and for a man sholde be
the lesse wery to saye it/and for a man may not excuse hym
to lerne it / hit is so short and so esy / and for it compre-
hendith in hym self alle goode prayers ¶ Thexposicyon of
of this holy prayer that is so excellent and so digne/I be-
take to the maistres of theologye / Saue thus muche wyl
I saye / That whan thou prayest that gode sholde forgeue
the thy giltys as thou forgeuyst hem that haue agiltyd the
Be wel ware that thou be not out of charyte / This holy
orison amenusith eke temporal synne/And therfore it appar-
teyneth specially to penitence/This prayer muste be treuly
saide in very feith/and that men praye to gode ordinatly+
discretly+ and deuoutly+ Alleway a man shal put his wille
to be subiect to the wil of gode / This oryson muste eke be
sayde with grete humblenes and ful pure and honestly+
and not to the anoysaunce of ony man or woman/hit muste
eke be contynued with werkis of charite / hit auayleth eke
ayenst the vicis of the soule / For as saith saint Jherome+
by fastyng be sauyd the vicis of the flesshe/and by prayers
the vicis of the soule/After this thou shalt vnderstande that
bodely peyne stont in wakyng/ For Jhesu crist saith/Wake ye
& praye ye that ye ne entre in to wicked temptacion/ye shal
vnderstande that fastyng standeth in thre thynges/in for-
bering of bodily mete & drynke/& in forbering of wordly
Jolytees/& in forbering of dedely synne with al his might
And thou shalt vnderstande that gode ordyned fastinge

And to fastyngh apperteyneth foure thingis/largenes to poure folk/gladnes in herte spirytuel/not be angryd ne to be anoyed ne to grutche for he fastith/And also resonable houre for to ete by mesure/That is to saye that a man sholdy not ete in vntyme ne sitte the lenger at his table for he fastith/Therme shalt thou vnderstande that bodily peyne stondeth in disciplyne or techyngh by worde or by wrytyngh/or by ensample/Also in weryngh of heir/or of stamyn/or of ay habergeon on her nakedy flesh for cristis sake/& that suche maner penaunces/ne make not thy herte bitter or angry ne anoyedy of thy self/For better is to caste away thyn heyr than to caste awey the swetenes of our lordy Jhesu Crist. And therfore saith saynt Poule/Clothe you as they that ben chosen of gody in herte/of mysericorde. debonairte. suf; fraunce and suche maner of clothyngh/in whiche Jhesu crist is more apaidy than m any heyr or habergeon/than is disci; plyne eke in knockyngh of thy breste/in scourgyngh with yerdis. in knelyngh. in tribulacions. in suffryngh paciently wrongis that be do to hym/andy eke in pacient suffryngh of maladyes/or lesynges/of worldly catel/or wyf. or chylde. or other frendis/Therme shalt thou vnderstande whiche thingis distourbley penaunce/And this is in thre ma; ners that is drede/shame/andy wanhope that is desperacion And for to speke of drede/for whiche he wenethy he may suf fre no penaunce/ther ayenst is remedye for to thynke that bodely penaunce is but short atte regarde of helle/that is cruel andy so longe that it lastyth withouten ende./Noth ayenst shame that a man hath to shryue hym/Sholde a man thynke by way of resoy/that he hath not be a shamedy

to do foule thingh / Certis hym ought not to be aſchamedy
to do feir thingis andy goody thyngis / Andy that is con=
feſſyons / A man ſholdy thynke that gody Woot al his
thoughtis andy his Werkis andy to hym may no thingh be
hydy ne oueridy / Mey ſholdy eke remembre hem of the ſhame
that is to come at the day of dome to hem / that be not peny=
tent in this preſent lif. For al the creaturis in heuene andy
in erthe andy in helle ſhul ſee appertly al that they hidey in
this Worldy / Nolw for to ſpeke of hem that ben ſo necligent
andy ſlowe to ſhriue hem / it ſtondeth in tlwo maners / That
one is that he hopeth to liue longe / andy forto purchace muche
riches for his delyte / Andy theme Wil he ſhriue hym as he
ſaith / he may as hym ſemeth tymely ynolw come to ſhrifte
Another is the furquydrye that he hath in Criſtes mercy.
Andy ayenſt the firſt he ſhal thynke that our lyf is in no
ſikernes / Andy eke that alle the riches of the Worldy is in
auenture & paſſyngh as a ſhadolwe oy a Wal / Andy as ſaith
ſeint Gregore That it appertyneth to the grete rightWyſ
neſſe of gody / that neuer ſhal the peyne ſtynte of them that
neuer Wold Withdralwe hem fro ſynne her thankis but euer
contynuedy in ſynne / For that perpetuel Wille to do ſynne.
ſhal they haue perpetuel peyne / Wanhope is in tlwo maners
The firſt Wanhope is in the mercy of gody / That other is
that they thinke that they may not longe perſeuere in goody=
nes / The firſt Wanhope cometh of that he demeth that he hath
ſynnedy ſo gretly / ſo ofte / andy ſo longe leyn in ſynne that he
ſhal not be ſauedy / Certis ayenſt ỹ curſidy Wanhope he ſholde
thinke that the paſſion of Jheſu is more ſtronge to vnbynde
than ſynne is to bynde / Andy ayenſt the ſeconde Wanhope

he ſhal thynke that as ofte as he fallith / he ſhal aryſen by penytence / And̄ though he neuer ſo longe haue leyn̄ in ſynne The mercy of Criſt is alway redy to receyue hym to mercy Ayenſt the wanhope that he demyth that he ſholdy not longe perſeuere in goodnes / he ſhal thynke that the febilnes of the deuyl may no thing do but men wol ſuffre hym / And̄ eke he ſhal haue ſtrengthe of god̄ and̄ of alle holy chirche and̄ of the protectyon of aungellis yf hym liſt / Thenne ſhulle men̄ vnderſtonde what is the fruyt of penaunce / and̄ after the word̄ of Jheſu Criſt / it is endeles bliſſe of heuene There ioye hath no contrarioſite of woo ne greuaunce / there alle harmys be paſt of this preſent lyf / there as is ſikernes fro the peynes of helle / there as is the bleſſid̄ companye that reioyſen̄ euermore eueriche of others Joye / there as the body of man̄ that whylom was foulle and̄ derk is more clere than the ſonne / there as whylom the body was ſeke and̄ freel + feble and̄ mortal / Is nimortal and̄ ſo ſtronge and̄ ſo hool that ther may no thing enpayre hit / there as neyther is hunger ne thriſt ne colde / but euery ſoule repleneſſhid̄ with the ſight of the parfyght knowyng of the trynyte / This bleſſid̄ regne may man̄ purchace by pouert ſpirytuel / and̄ the glorye by lowneſſe / the plente of Joye by hunger and̄ thriſt And̄ the reſte by trauayll / and̄ the lyf by deth and̄ mortificacion of ſynne / To that lyf he vs bringe that bought with his precyous blood̄ Amen +

Explicit Tractatus Galfridi Chaucer de Penitencia Vt dicatur pro fabula Rectoris +

NOw pray I to hem alle that herkene this litil tretyse
or rede/that yf ther be ony thimg that liketh hem/that
therof they thanke our lordy Jhesu Crist of whom procedeth
al Wit & goodnes/Andy yf ther be ony thimg that displese
hem I praye hem also that they arette it to the defaute of myn
vnconnynge Jfor our book saith/al that is Writen/is Writen
for our doctrine Andy that is myn entent/Wherfore I beseke
you mekely for the mercy of gody/that ye for me praye that
crist haue mercy on me & forgeue me my giltis/andy namely
of my translacions of Wordly Vanytees/the Whiche I reuoke
in my retractions / as is the book of troylus / the book also of
fame/the book of .xxv. ladies/the book of ỹ duchesse/the book
of seynt Valentyns day of the parlament of birdis/the talis
of Caunterbury tho that sowny vnto synne/the book of the
lyon/and many other bokis yf they Were in my remembrance
andy many a songe & many a lecherous laye that crist of his
grete mercy forgeue me the synne/But of the translacion of
Boece de cõsolacõne & other bookis as of legendis of saintis
andy omelies. moralite. andy deuocion/that thanke I of our
lordy Jhesu crist & his blessidy moder & alle the saintis of heuene
Besechimgy hem that they from hensforth vnto my liuys ende
sende me grace to bewayle my giltis that it may stande vnto
the sauacion of my soule/& graunte me grace of Verrey repen-
tance/confession/andy satisfaction to doo in this present lif/
thurgh the kemgne grace of hym that is kynge of kyngis &
preest of alle preestis that bought vs With the precyous blood
of his herte/so that I may be one of hem at the day of dome
that shal be sauidy . Qui cũ patre et spũ scõ viuit et regnat
deus . Per omnia secula seculoz Amen .